# Rhetorical Diplomacy and U.S. International Influence: The Path of Democracy in Burma

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to those who endure oppression because of their belief in democracy, who work for free and fair elections, and who continue to hope for freedom from fear of their rulers.

## ABSTRACT

Rhetorical diplomacy involves pressing U.S. foreign policy initiatives and vision of U.S. presidents through their rhetorical actions. In the rhetorical presidency paradigm the president encounters a resistant regime or government who refuses to pass or adopt U.S. policy. In order to press a regime a president then must form alliances with two parties: the first are those with whom the resistant regime is allied. This is commonly accomplished by influencing trade associations or regional associations with whom the U.S. has alliances and who then may force the resistant regime to acquiesce to U.S. demands. The second group are those social movement actors within the resistant governments country who press the regime internally. These actions involve giving speeches, remarks, and statements by the president and those who represent the Executive Branch. No other international leader, at the present, has the prestige and capability of speaking to world peoples and leaders with such rhetorical impact, and these rhetorical impacts are made possible through rhetorical diplomacy without the high cost of military intervention.

The Burmese pro-democracy remains one of the few cases where, through presidential diplomacy, a totalitarian regime has acquiesced to the demands of local and nonviolent social movements without foreign military intervention. This dissertation examines the last two decades of U.S. presidential involvement in the Burmese democracy movement and assesses how rhetorical diplomacy has successfully motivated a resistant military regime to institute democratic reforms. I also analyze the political,

financial, and military relationships involved in rhetorical diplomacy that presidents must balance.

This dissertation provides a space for Burmese peoples and democratic leaders to voice their opinions concerning U.S. involvement in their country. The second half of this dissertation analyzes surveys and interviews I conducted in Burma in the Summer of 2014, where I asked respondents to assess their agreement with U.S. policy, strategy, and engagement style. Thus, this dissertation offers a comprehensive analysis of rhetorical diplomacy and explains how rhetoric of U.S. presidents are meaningful to those who U.S. foreign policy ostensibly assists.

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# INTRODUCTION

What one says in a public forum, much less an international one, has some impact on the ears of viewers and hearers. This sense comes from the belief that what one says to others has some sort of influence, and centuries of rhetorical theory agree that persuasion, a complex task as it may be, is possible between parties. This is an issue imbued with some amount of contention. Scholars, such as George C. Edwards (2009), argue "most people are too inattentive or too committed to views to be strongly influenced by elite efforts at persuasion" (p. 71). G. C. Edwards has long been skeptical on the ability of presidents to have a great degree of influence, yet he mistakenly assesses the impact of speech through polls which measure shifts in public before/after the speech. This is not true of what any person considers as persuasive speech, for singling out one instance of interaction, out of the hundreds we have as a person, as indicative of our relationship with that person would be preposterous. A president has years in which to persuade and shift the values of his audience, and while no other person occupies such a position of high esteem (at least on the world stage), there should be further scholarship into how that speech matters. Mary E. Stuckey (2009) disagrees with G. C. Edwards:

> It does seem clear that presidents, in collaboration with the media, can influence which issues the public considers important; they can also influence the terms through which the public comes to understand those issues and can also affect the values used to make judgments about those issues. (p. 33)

Stuckey agrees with my position that speech must matter—or else our words fall on

deaf ears and are worthless, and I cannot imagine any Sisyphean activity lasting as long as presidential speech has.

This dissertation offers the case study of the Burmese pro-democracy movement to reveal how U.S. presidential rhetorical action in defense of that movement motivated an oppressive regime to adopt significant political reforms. The rise of globalization and a more interdependent world should give rise to more scholarship into how presidential speech affects hearers and viewers—not from the limited study of opinion polls but in the study of how years and a continuum of presidents have shaped a central foreign issue. I argue that there's a sense that most people have about the influence of the United States abroad, but until scholars take the time to study how exactly that influence is brought to bear upon the world, such opinions are rooted in supposition. This dissertation looks at the Burmese pro-democracy social movement and assesses how rhetorical diplomacy impacted the success of that movement. In describing the impact of presidential speech in this particular instance, perhaps I may then draw some conclusions about the significance of the overall impact, or the potential influence, of presidential speech on the world stage in general.

The president retains inherited executive powers, status, and authority that give him great advantages in dealing with those he wishes to persuade, yet operating within vast national and international discourse communities presents serious difficulties for a president who wishes to retain popular support (Neustadt, 1960). While messages crafted for domestic audiences may be welcomed, they may be received quite differently by constituents abroad (Dryzek, 2006; Neustadt, 1960). The successful exercise of

rhetorical diplomacy is therefore predicated upon a president's rhetorical ability to persuade a global community of nations and peoples while maintaining his integrity with domestic constituents. In an increasingly globalized world, a president may not address domestic concerns at the expense of international standing, for international prestige impacts national security, global commercial interests, and ultimately power (K. K. Campbell & Jamieson, 2008; Dryzek, 2006; Greenstein, 2009). Although some solutions to international concerns are incongruent with domestic sensibilities, Hook and Spanier (2010) report "in surveys Americans favored an active world role for the United States, especially on issues related to global justice, the environment, and arms control" (p. 362). Isolationism and unilateral action by a president, although such positions may be temporarily popular domestically, are thus incongruent with the contemporary rhetorical diplomacy.

Presidential influence in international affairs has risen not only because of numerous military engagements abroad, but also because of the rhetorical powers given to the president to represent the United States in the international community. The president is the representative of the United States internationally, and through his involvement in foreign affairs, how a president communicates U.S. interests impacts the credibility of the United States. Likewise, when a president communicates to global audiences, his presentation of features of U.S. international identity impact the degree of U.S. influence in foreign affairs. Recognizing this interplay between rhetoric and presidential power, I argue that when a president speaks to world nations, his rhetorical acumen affects his nation's economy, security, and a multitude of other areas associated

with his nation's international image. It is therefore important to explore how rhetorical diplomacy does thus equip the U.S. president with the necessary tools to persuade foreign audiences of the values, virtues, and merit of U.S. international leadership.

Readers will immediately note my consistent and reflexive use of "Burma" as a way to describe the country now renamed "Myanmar." I use Burma deliberately because the Burmese democracy movement, which is described at length in this dissertation, opposes the renaming of Burma. Democracy movement members and leaders do not disagree with the name itself, but because as Dale (2011) says "retaining the British name Burma is an act of political protest against the ruling military's claim to legitimate authority, including its authority to officially rename the country" (p. xiv). I locate an explanation of my use of Burma in this introduction because it's a good place to start the discussion of a research project which endeavors to present the views of an indigenous people. A people who should have the right to control their economic, political, and social destiny, and the Burmese people do not have those choices—they did not even have the choice in renaming their own country.

This dissertation examines how rhetorical diplomacy can come to the assistance of social movements who seek reforms from their government. Central to this dissertation is a sense that indigenous peoples have the right to their own voice and agency. I have gone to great lengths to ascertain the opinions of the Burmese social movement actors whom three administrations repeatedly defended through their speeches. I did not go to Burma because of my desire for high adventure or conduct field research in an exotic locale. I went to Burma to survey and interview the leaders and

members of democratic movements because I felt it was important to include in my analysis their opinion of the speeches that U.S. administrations gave on their behalf. It seemed troubling to me that an elite political person, often speaking from the White House in Washington, DC, speaks on behalf of people who do not have the chance to respond to his speech. It is my hope that, throughout this dissertation, I am consistent in my fairness to the voices of those who have been voiceless and marginalized by the oppressive tactics of their regime leaders.

I began this dissertation project in an effort to find a nonviolent method of resolving conflict between nations. As a person who has experienced firsthand how violence can erupt between two peoples, perhaps this dissertation reflects a sort of intellectual destiny, where I wrestle with solutions to the history of human violence. The research I present in this dissertation will reveal that rhetorical diplomacy should be a central feature in the foreign relations calculus of the president. This dissertation does more than argue against the use of violence, it explains a practice, a method, a way of conducting foreign affairs in a manner that conserves U.S. political and economic resources, facilitates cooperation with other nations, and encourages the protection of human rights in nations throughout the world community. This dissertation is not an argument against violence; it is an explanation of how globalization should alter how leaders may forge a new sort of foreign relations with each other that does not end in the catastrophe of military intervention.

The advent of a globally interconnected economy necessitates that political leaders employ methods that create stability, for economic development depends on a

stable and functioning financial environment. Simply said, military intervention creates more instability than it could possibly hope to create—even in the long run Any businessperson should recognize the common sense notion that it is unwise to disrupt an economic system from which one profits.. It may not seem that military intervention does this, but the instability that war creates inhibits financial investment and economic growth in countries throughout the world—even in the United States. My explanation of rhetorical diplomacy should be of interest to a variety of readers: presidential studies, social movement research, foreign affairs, and rhetorical theory scholars.

In Chapter 1, I begin my examination of rhetorical diplomacy by explaining the rhetorical presidency. Many of the features of the rhetorical presidency are found in rhetorical diplomacy. In this chapter I present the rhetorical presidency paradigm to explain a president's options when encountering a resistant regime or government who refuses to pass or adopt U.S. policy. In the case of the rhetorical presidency, the president appeals to the public, who then pressures Congress to pass the president's policies. Many features of the rhetorical presidency translate well in an international context - an arena over which the president has constitutional authority. In the case of rhetorical diplomacy, when the president encounters a resistant regime his/her administration forms alliances with two parties: the first are those with whom the resistant regime is allied. This is commonly accomplished by influencing trade associations or regional associations with whom the U.S. has alliances and who then may force the resistant regime to acquiesce to U.S. demands. The second group are those social movement actors within the resistant governments country who press the regime

internally In the rhetorical presidency paradigm the president encounters a resistant regime or government who refuses to pass or adopt U.S. policy. Some of those policies may include human rights, democracy, gender equality, etc. In order to press a regime a president then must form alliances with two parties: the first are those with whom the resistant regime is allied. This is commonly accomplished by influencing trade associations or regional associations with whom the U.S. has alliances and who then may force the resistant regime to acquiesce to U.S. demands. The second group are those social movement actors within the resistant governments country who press the regime internally discuss how rhetorical diplomacy and the rhetorical presidency both seek to form alliances with entities who may pressure resistant leaders in order to adopt a president's policy. In rhetorical diplomacy, a president forms alliances with social movement actors, within a resistant regime's country and forms alliances with a resistant regime's allies. He then uses those alliances to pressure the regime to reform at an opportune moment (*kairos*).

In Chapter 2, I embark on a brief history of the Burmese democracy movement surrounding the mass protests of 1988 and subsequent events which drew U.S. attention to Burma.. The discussion in this chapter will provide the necessary context to examine how rhetorical diplomacy assisted democratic leaders and members in Burma. This chapter exposes the horrifying history of oppression of nonviolent social movement actors during the 1988 mass protests and the subsequent events which have shaped U.S. - Burma relations. It is a history that should be troubling for those interested in the protection of human rights as a basic function of our human societies. This chapter

provides the context for the following chapters that discuss how presidents rhetorically assisted democratic movement leaders in Burma.

In Chapter 3, I begin my discussion of U.S. foreign-policy and rhetorical diplomacy as executed by the U.S. president. In this chapter, I discuss President Bill Clinton's foreign policy and how he endeavored to create a globally interconnected economy which would eliminate military intervention as an appealing method of solving conflict between nations. I begin the discussion of rhetorical diplomacy with Bill Clinton because he is the first of three presidents who took a particular interest in the Burmese democracy movement. He was the first to institute harsh sanctions and the first to try to reach a diplomatic solution with the Burmese regime. In this chapter, I also analyze the speeches and statements made by the Clinton administration on behalf of the Burmese democracy movement.

Chapter 4 continues the discussion of presidential rhetoric and foreign policy with the presidency of George W. Bush. In this chapter, I discuss Bush's foreign policy as a way to explain how his strategy limited the alliance forming potential of rhetorical diplomacy. This chapter provides considerable space for an analysis of the Bush administration's rhetoric. I extensively analyze Bush administration speeches and statements, which sought to assist Burmese democracy movement leaders. Ultimately, this chapter will provide a springboard from which extensive comparative analysis with Obama's presidency may be performed.

Chapter 5 examines how Barack Obama re-formulated U.S. foreign-policy strategy and committed his presidency to rhetorical diplomacy. This chapter, more than

the Clinton and Bush chapters, more fully describes the execution of rhetorical diplomacy—as implemented rhetorically through speeches and statements. The discussion of rhetorical diplomacy in this chapter is featured more prominently, simply because Obama sought diplomatic solutions to conflict and resisted using military intervention to solve world issues. In this chapter, I extensively analyze the Obama administration international and Burma speeches and statements as a way to fully explain the features of rhetorical diplomacy.

Chapter 6 describes the survey and interview methods I employed in an effort to gain data on the opinions of Burmese democracy movement leaders and members. In this chapter, I describe the challenges I experienced in pursuing a field research project instantly complicated by translation issues, cultural differences, and issues associated with conducting field research abroad. This chapter explains that my survey and interview methods needed to be flexible in order to respond dynamically to the exigencies which threatened to impede progress in my research in Burma. In this chapter, I explain how conducting research in Burma both presented opportunities and constrained the project at the same time.

In Chapter 7, I discuss the results of my surveys and interviews in Burma. My analysis of the survey data relies on interviews with democracy movement leaders as a way to explain survey results. In this chapter, I present survey respondents' opinions of administration speeches and statements, administration reform strategies, and explain the possible prospect of peace in the post-regime Burma. This chapter creates a space for indigenous peoples to respond to the speeches and statements made by presidents and

politicians on their behalf. It is my hope that this chapter gives some sort of agency to those who have been powerless for too long.

In Chapter 8, I end my dissertation with a discussion of the significance of my survey and interview results. I also explain the limitations of a research project whose field research is conducted in a country run by an oppressive regime, only recently opened to the world. In this chapter, I explain how the survey and interview results offer some important insights into how rhetorical diplomacy and social movements may work to reform the actions of a despotic regime. In this chapter, I explain the striking results of my survey and interview research in Burma. I also provide a space in this chapter for a rigorous explanation of the limitations of this research project. I locate these gaps in my research as a way to challenge future scholars to complete the research that this dissertation could not.

Every research project comes with the inherent misgivings of an author offering up an intellectual progeny to readership. Throughout this dissertation, I try to give a full account of the rhetorical diplomacy in the Burmese democracy movement. There is always more to write, more research to complete, and more sculpting of words to be wrought. I offer this dissertation in the hopes that it is as complete as the affordances of time and space permit. It is my hope that, at the end of reading this dissertation, my readers will have a better understanding of the relevance of rhetorical diplomacy and how the president may best interact in an increasingly interconnected world.

# CHAPTER 1

## Defining the Rhetorical Presidency

Much has been written about presidential rhetorical power and his ability, or lack thereof, to persuade and move public opinion. The idea of one singular person moving the public through speech to adopt his (and hopefully one day "her") point of view on matters ranging from politics to U.S. values is problematic, for a democracy facilitates contestation and emboldens resistance to unitary executive power. Unarguably, the president remains a central figure in U.S. political and social life—no one else commands the power and prestige that his office affords him, and no one else attracts the attention he and his office receives. Please note that I have used the gender pronoun "his" and "he" throughout this text primarily because no woman has yet been elected to this office—my use of the male pronoun does not constitute a preference for a particular gender, merely a reflection of the history of the presidency.

This chapter defines the rhetorical presidency in ways that previous scholars have neglected or ignored as important to their theories on executive power. I argue that the rhetorical presidency is best understood as a *social practice*, and the framework of this social practice is best explored using rhetorical theory—the scholarly study of persuasive speech within society. As used within the scope of this dissertation, social practice is the process of engagement with a national community shaped by a constituency's needs, values, and attitudes. The presidency, as a social practice, presses policies that reflect the values of the nation while directing the public's attention to issues that are important to the president. The social practice of the presidency,

therefore, is defined by a president's calculated negotiation of the exigencies that face his nation and the national values of his constituency. While political scientists such as Tulis (1987), G. C. Edwards (1995, 2009), and Neustadt (1960) do explore the extent to which presidential power is executed, they often fail to reveal how a president may be persuasive and shift public opinion. It is in this chapter that we begin to answer the central question of this dissertation: how does speech matter? Why does it matter that a president speaks to constituencies throughout the world? The act of persuasion is a deeply complex process that involves a variety of negotiations that must be explored in order to fully understand how the president is able to shift public opinion through rhetorical actions.

In order to build the framework of the international implications of the rhetorical presidency, this chapter will define the social practice of the rhetorical presidency by examining its connection to theories of rationality, argumentation, the social position of the rhetorical presidency, and how presidential rhetoric works to shift public opinion. In this chapter, I begin building the theoretical structure to defend my position that speech matters and examine scholarly research of the rhetorical presidency through the lens of rhetorical theories put forth by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (2008) and Burke (1969, 1970, 1984, 1989). These rhetorical theorists offer terminological concepts that locate the implications of presidential rhetors who work to form national consensus for their political initiatives. Only by defining the social presence and influence of the rhetorical presidency will I then be able to discuss in later portions of this dissertation the significance of a U.S. president who interacts with world nations and their leaders.

## Definition of the Rhetorical Presidency

The rhetorical presidency is defined by the influence and power of the executive branch brought about by persuasive interactions with citizens, Congress, and the wider world (Tulis, 1987). Beyond a president's constitutional obligation to offer an account of the State of the Union, these powers are rhetorical in the sense that they have no definitional properties under the Constitution, but are reflective of the history, status, and position through which a president wields considerable authority (K. K. Campbell & Jamieson, 2008). Tulis (1987) contends that "synoptic change, as distinct from incremental policy, seems to require an executive energized by direct relation to the people" (p. 175). Neustadt (1960) explains "presidential 'powers' may be inconclusive when a President commands, but always remain relevant as he persuades," for "the status and authority inherent in his office reinforce his logic and his charm" (p. 34). Therefore, the relationships between rhetoric and presidential power are inextricably connected, for rhetorical presidents are "interpersonally adept orators who elevate narrative or aphorism to argument in mass communicated messages" (Henry et al., 2008, p. 342). In this way, the institution of the presidency encourages executive powers by directly communicating to the public, for while the Constitution offers implied powers to the president, rhetoric actuates and puts those powers into practice (Beasley et al., 2008).

Even though Congress has increasingly been able to present its policy platform to the public via CSPAN and other 24-hour news networks, the President predominantly presents policy, sets an agenda, and performs daily interaction with the public (Neustadt,

1960). Explaining the paradox between rhetorical power and constitutional power, K. K. Campbell and Jamieson (2008) reveal that

> presidential rhetoric is one source of executive power, enhanced in the modern presidency by the ability of presidents to speak when, where, and on whatever topic they choose and to reach a national audience through coverage by the electronic media. (p. 6)

Although the modern media certainly enable the president to speak to millions, with his rhetorical skill, a president capitalizes on his political authority, power, and prestige to elicit the attention of the U.S. public.

The power of the executive branch does not only emanate from opportunities to communicate to the public, but is defined by rhetorical power. Tulis (1987) explains that

> rhetorical power is thus not only a form of "communication," it is also a way of constituting the people to whom it is addressed by furnishing them with the very equipment they need to assess its use—the metaphors, categories, and concepts of political discourse. (p. 203)

Thus, the executive branch maintains considerable power to frame and present issues that are reflective of U.S. values while redefining U.S. values that reflect the policy platform of the president. Rhetorical power can be simultaneously used by the president to defend his use of executive powers and is also a power itself as he attempts to shift public attention on issues of his choosing (G. C. Edwards, 2009; Tulis, 1987). Beyond articulating issues to the public, the president maintains influence in the legislative branch because the need for executive leadership creates a fundamental dependence on him (Neustadt, 1960). This stark reality becomes clearer asa recent Congressional bodies have prevented the president from passing comprehensive legislation. Thus, it is both

through his constitutionally mandated executive power, as well as the opportunity to use rhetorical power, that a president may constitute the body politic.

Finally, the rhetorical president is also constrained by his ability to persuade. While certain executive functions of government are granted constitutionally, his ability to promote policy is dependent upon his power to persuade (Neustadt, 1960; Tulis, 1987). Tulis (1987) maintains "without the power to persuade, so this reasoning goes, the formal authority promised by the Constitution will not become actual" (p. 54). Although the Constitution grants considerable implied powers (as previously indicated as powers not enumerated in Article 2 of the Constitution), executive power is never realized without rhetorical power; therefore, a president whose rhetorical ability is lacking will have difficulty leading the nation.

## The Rhetorical Presidency and Reason

Missing from the preceding definitions of the rhetorical presidency is an explanation of the rhetorical nature of presidential discourse. Although Tulis (1987), Neustadt (1960), and G. C. Edwards (2009) do rightly explain what rhetorical functions the president employs in order to press his policy initiatives in government, they fail to precisely describe how these rhetorical functions are rooted in speech acts, how they intersect with audiences, and, more importantly, they fail to precisely examine the definitional properties that presuppose a view of the presidency as "rhetorical."

I define the rhetorical presidency as a social practice of institutional engagement that seeks to pressure legislators to pass presidential policy initiatives by appealing to the

public, yet how exactly could this practice possibly be effective? Tulis (1987) explains the significance of this political strategy:

> Direct popular appeal has been the central element of a political strategy that has produced a stunning string of partisan successes, including budget cuts, tax reform, a large military build-up and accompanying social and diplomatic policies. Beneath the differing policies of Democrats and Republicans and varying abilities to secure partisan objectives lies a common understanding of the essence of the modern presidency-rhetorical leadership. (p. 4)

The terminology here of popular appeal might fruitfully be understood in terms of argumentation, for when a president puts forth a policy initiative he is putting forth a propositional expression that must be reasonable—*as conceived by his audience.* Although a president seeks to persuade *all* of the U.S. people, in reality he must maintain the immediate norms and values of those who elected him to office. This explains, in part, Tulis' assertion that change, facilitated by the president, is negotiated through speech acts that elevate the perception of the president as a reasonable person. Tulis does not go far enough in explaining how a president's speech act must first be viewed as reasonable when he puts forth evidence for his position, follows the accepted values of his audience, and articulates his positions through legitimate expectations. I do not argue here that Tulis' position is invalid, yet without a precise and detailed investigation of what "rhetorical" means in the "rhetorical presidency," he lacks a precise vocabulary to describe how the president persuades a universal audience, of its practice within U.S. and, for that matter, international societies to whom the president now seeks to persuade. Tulis and other scholars often fail to acknowledge that presidential rhetorical power is

predicated on the perception that his policies agree with the norms and values of those who listen to him.

Tulis (1987) and Neustadt (1960) maintain that a president's relative credibility is built upon his/her ability to express himself/herself, and then to carry those expressions into the foray of interaction, he must defend those expressions by using objective knowledge (previously agreed upon facts). Expressions, when viewed in terms of the artifice of language, are acts of symbolic interaction between parties. On the surface, it may seem to be digressive to found the discussion of the rhetorical presidency by first reviewing the basic functionality of linguistic interaction. However, we must obtain a vocabulary, a way of describing the linguistic functions of the president if we agree with the notion that the president realizes his executive power through speech acts. These speech acts become important symbolic negotiations that go beyond the limited and ambiguous description of executive power by the Constitution of the United States of America: "the executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America" (U.S. Const., art. 2, § 1)." In *Language as Symbolic Action*, Burke (1989) helps explain the linguistic properties of an assertion:

> We discern situational patterns by means of the particular vocabulary of the cultural group into which we are born. Our minds, as linguistic products, are composed of concepts (verbally molded) which select certain relationships as meaningful. Other groups may select other relationships as meaningful. These relationships are not *realities*, they are *interpretations* of reality—hence different frameworks of interpretation will lead to different conclusions as to what reality is. (p. 130)

The extended quote by Burke positions the rhetorical president as a *person whose speech acts are a reflection of the linguistic properties of a national U.S. culture.* The president

is able to rhetorically interact with citizens because of commonly shared concepts which are embedded within a language that is shared and extended through its common use in U.S. society. On the surface, this may seem too obvious that a language serves to unite a people, but Burke reveals that language, in it's very essence, serves to construct the interpretations of reality that language extends. Obviously, this framework of linguistic reality does not remove differences of cultural, ideological, and socioeconomic values, for language provides the interpretive framework where interlocutors may understand each other. However, Burke reveals that the concepts, which are constructed through the use of language, enable a person to evaluate a situation through his or her interpretation of reality. More importantly, the *terministic screens* that form the capacity to understand a situation are developed through the cultural group into which a person is born and raised. The implications of this notion are vast when applied to international interactions: if nationality is a vector of culture, then an audience's interpretive framework constrains how a president's message is received, and as an orator from another culture, a president's message must be crafted to meet the demands of his international audience while maintaining domestic approval. While a president's political capital is dependent on domestic approval, U.S. audiences will hold privileged positions within his rhetorical calculus. If the norms, values, and framework of reality are markedly different between these two audiences, the president's ability to elicit agreement from multiple nationalities simultaneously may seem impossible—I shall address this constraint in proceeding chapters.

A presidential speech act that is effective intersects with the constellation of worldviews of his audience—these worldviews are defined through shared pre-established norms, values, and experiences of his audience. Because worldviews are located within concentric circles of representations of "universal" identities of a large group of a people who are spread out over vast geographic areas which then ripple out and connect to localized groups and are less uniformly consensual. For example, the people of Boston, Massachusetts have national norms and values that intersect with a greater population of the United States, but their local urban values may disagree with local values of Topeka, Kansas. Thus, as his speech act seeks agreement with the worldviews held by his audience, a president's proposition is contested through arguments which are defined, informed, and extended by the worldviews of his universal audience. This notion of interconnected and socially constructed worldviews is foundational to understanding the rhetorical presidency, for presidents speak to a wide variety of groups that represent disparate worldviews. Furthermore, in order to successfully manage the interconnections between those worldviews, the president must locate his speech act within the more generalized framework of "U.S." national values—the management of worldview connections then becomes increasingly complicated when the president speaks to international audiences.

The President of the United States situates himself as representative of U.S. values, for while others represent U.S. national values, he has more access to situate political and social issues within the landscape of those values (K. K. Campbell &

Jamieson, 2008; Stuckey 2004). K. K. Campbell and Jamieson (2008) explain this notion more fully:

> As national priest, the president is the custodian of national values, values that are at play in every genre we explore, values embodied in the Constitution but extended beyond it to encompass what we have learned as a nation and memorialized in past presidential discourse. (p. 12)

I began my discussion of the rhetorical presidency in terms of values and worldviews because this foundation leads to understanding the rhetorical constraints of persuading audiences beyond U.S. shores. However, the interplay of disparate values and persuasive speech in the United States help position the president to speak to peoples throughout the world, for often there is a recognition that cultural homogeneity is an illusion—particularly in the United States. Thus, a president's craft is rooted in the ability to construct a message that is acceptable through a multiplicity of socially accepted norms and values—a task that an ancient Athenian orator would find nightmarishly complex.

While consensus does imply a uniform understanding between two parties—the process by which an orator and audience reach understanding, build a framework to understand each other, and through a continuum of messages (speeches and statements) persuade foreign leaders to acquiesce to U.S. foreign policy. While a president's rhetorical actions relate to vectors of social values common between entities in an effort to build a consensus of knowledge, I do not claim that a *totality* of consensus may ever exist. Rather, rhetors are agents who must position particular rhetorical actions as part of a body of knowledge in order for an audience to conceptualize those rhetorical actions as

reasonable. This notion is fundamental to the latter parts of this dissertation which focus on U.S. presidential rhetorical actions with Burma, where I argue that too often presidents did not frame foreign policy in ways that are reasonable for their international audience.

Consensus, built through presidential elections, is sustained and renewed through speech acts that serve to connect the policies of a president to the values of his constituency. Stuckey (2004) explains "the presidency is the repository of a certain amount of cultural consensus" (p. 8). When a president seeks to achieve consensus or seeks to garner public support of his policy, the truth of his utterance must be argued, must persist in its validity, and remains in contest with other claims. This notion is elucidated by the competing views held by the president, opposing political parties, and special interest groups who compete with each other as they seek to persuade citizens of the United States to agree with their point of view.

The power of the rhetorical presidency is rooted in the president's ability to persuade. Tulis (1987) explains this notion more fully:

> Most of the observers of the presidency hold that a president's power to command depends upon his power to persuade. Without the power to persuade, so this reasoning goes, the formal authority promised by the Constitution will not become actual. (p. 54)

Aristotle (2007) is a good ending point to this section to connect Tulis's treatment of the rhetorical presidency as a social practice that creates the capacity for presidential persuasion: "Persuasion occurs though the arguments [*logoi*] when we show the truth or the apparent truth from whatever is persuasive in each case" (Aristotle, 1.2.6.). A

president's claims do not necessarily need to follow the formal logic of Aristotelian rhetoric; they may be more nuanced, more connected to social and therefore not regarded as explicitly obvious arguments. Rhetorical theorist Chaïm Perelman (2001) maintains that appeals to values influence action: "They supply *reasons* [my emphasis] for preferring one type of behavior to another, although not all would necessarily accept them as good reasons," and "most values are particular in that they are accepted only by a particular group" (p. 1394). In a speech act, a president locates the values of his audience as a constitutive element embedded in the process of reaching understanding—which may then be used to coordinate the actions of parties. However, because particular values are held by particular groups, the values represented in a president's speech act must be general enough to intersect with those of his general "U.S." audience. Values, in this way, become rooted in how arguments, linked to proposed action, are resolved to form consensus. Stated more clearly: a president may achieve consensus on his proposed action by claiming that his proposition agrees with the values of his audience.

## Rhetorical Action and Audience

Now that I have revealed the practice of persuasion, as described through rhetorical theory, it is necessary to reveal the structure of audiences. An exploration into argumentation and audience is particularly important to defining the practice of the rhetorical presidency. It is thus important to discuss further how the interplay of modern rhetorical theory's conception of audience is linked to the concept of the rhetorical presidency—this discussion will locate the terminology utilized by my forthcoming

discussion of presidential discourse.

Rhetorical actors (in this case presidents) do not genuinely seek to cooperatively understand truth but hold their own motives. Risse (2000) explains "actors engaging in rhetoric are not prepared to change their own beliefs or to be persuaded themselves by the 'better argument'" (p. 8). While political rhetors themselves often may not be sincere in their desire to seek consensual understanding through their speech acts, they are nonetheless faced with the same rhetorical situations. Political climate, security, and economic concerns often constrain a rhetor's capacity to substantively change their political positions. Although their speeches may not have been immediately viewed as consensus building actions, United States foreign policy and *how* that policy communicated styles differed greatly in the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations.

We must then consider a president's audience in terms of its contextual composition and worldviews. Burke (1989) reveals that if argumentation centers on the contextual construction of utterances, then language provides a symbolic construct whereby the human mind constructs meaning:

> The nature of the human mind itself, with the function of abstraction rooted in the nature of language, also provides us with "levels of generalization" (to employ Korzybski's term) by which situations greatly different in their particularities may be felt to belong in the same class (to have common substance or essence). (p. 77)

Burke reveals how language provides the basis through which humans achieve commonality. Language, in this sense, is a symbol system that influences the very nature of the human mind; or, we might look at language as a manifestation of the mind's proclivity to creating symbolic meaning. In either case, humans are born into a symbol

systems that guide how we classify and understand each other. If, in Burke's view, a human mind is "constructed" by the abstraction language, then those constructions do lead to a worldview that imposes a way of interpreting the world and thus a way of communicatively interacting.

I do not wish to claim that Presidential speech acts may only be ever effective for one particular group or are so generally persuasive that the president may never be able to assert any proposition with specificity. On the contrary, viewing argumentation as a continuum of persuasive interactions, a president gains a more complex understanding of the audience through prolonged and meaningful interaction. Certainly, there has to be a willingness to have such a prolonged process, but both parties may become more cognizant of the similarities that they share, which may not have been apparent in their initial contact. Also, the president may locate opinions, in that continuum of interactions, and thus amend his position to better buttress against overt differences.

## Argumentation and the Rhetorical Presidency

I have now described how the notion of a president's audience may be viewed through the rhetorical theories of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (2001) and Burke (1969, 1970, 1984, 1989). While there is certainly more to say about the construction of an audience, we may move forward to how presidential argumentation may be theoretically *applied* to audiences. Although this seems to conflict with the notion of the rhetorical presidency, I argue that this is a better conception of what executive administration does: unifying the vision and

articulation of U.S. values, norms, and identity. Burke (1969) explains that "you persuade a man insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his" and that "you give the 'signs' of such consubstantiality by deference to an audience's 'opinions'" (p. 55). Thus, through a process of consubstantiality, a president will facilitate agreement with his policy initiatives by locating the opinions of his audience. A successful presidential rhetor will therefore create a rhetorical "space" within his argument where his opinions intersect with those of his audience. As I have previously noted, this "space" is difficult, to say the least, to construct when one considers the landscape of diverse worldviews that represent U.S. culture. Burke recognizes that a persuasive argument is intersubjectively negotiated between the speaker and the audience.

The rhetorical presidency is a *practice* that occurs through a continuum of complex negotiations of repeated interactions which take place through time. Certainly, there is an urgency behind many presidential initiatives, for, in addition to term limitations, he must address exigencies that arise during his administration. However, a president interacts with the public, at the very least for four years, through a prolonged continuum of speeches, and through those negotiations he may move the public to adopt his views. This may occur incrementally and may sometimes seem inconsequential, yet a president's capacity to speak repeatedly to his constituency through the media creates a profound opportunity to negotiate interpersonal relations with the public.

Perelman (1982) explains that "argumentation, in its most complete elaboration, forms a discourse wherein the points of agreement upon which it is founded, as well as the arguments advanced, can be addressed, simultaneously or successively, to different audiences" (p. 49). Here, persuasion is not an instance reducible to pure communication: it is a form of discourse that endeavors to come to points of agreement between a particular rhetor and a particular audience. Throughout a continuum of speeches, a president will locate his propositions within the landscape of facts and truths (the objective world) through his articulation of shared social norms and values. Thus, a president's ability to persuade is determined by his capacity to recognize the intersubjective "spaces" that his audience members share. We may then articulate presidential argumentation as a consensus-forming act that is predicated upon his ability to locate social linkages between the groups of his audience. The implications of this notion at once become profound, for if persuasion may only occur within these parameters, a president must then understand that his message will not be receptive to members who have little connection to the common linkages found in his target audience. Thus, a president may not be able to persuade all of the people, all of the time.

Finally, the exploration of the rhetorical presidency must be situated in a discussion into how humans interact with each other through language and how that interaction is fundamental to human collectives. Extending his exploration

of collective identity, Burke (1969) explains that persuasion is a process whereby a person is rhetorically joined with another's position:

> In being identified with B, A is "substantially one" with a person other than himself. Yet at the same time he remains unique, an individual locus of motives. Thus he is joined and separate, at once a distinct substance and consubstantial with another. (p. 21)

Burke asserts that a rhetor persuades another through a demonstration of similar interests culminating in persuasion that elevates identification with the rhetor. The divisions between the rhetor and his audience are removed through a rigorous demonstration of how their interests coalesce and how the two parties identify with each other on a given principle. Burke asserts here that persuasion occurs on a deep fundamental level: it facilitates an emergence of a shared identity, however temporary it may be, so that the two parties may act together. Burke argues, here, that persuasion occurs when the rhetor has demonstrated to an audience, among other things, that they share similar interests.

This discussion of rhetorical theory, as it connects to presidential speech acts, will situate my forthcoming discussion of the rhetorical presidency as a practice of negotiating consensus. This notion of consensus helps to explain presidential power and social change as a continuum of leadership that occurs through term of office and the years that follow.

## Positioning the Rhetorical Presidency Within Society

Now that I have defined the rhetorical presidency using the exact precise terminology of audience and argumentation that rhetorical theorists offer, I move

to position the rhetorical presidency within society. The power of the rhetorical presidency is rooted in the president's ability to interact with the public, yet from my exploration of rhetorical theory in the previous sections, the rhetorical interactions between the president and an audience is a complex process of negotiating consensus on a given issue.

As an institution that exerts a type of pressure on society, the executive branch of government must work to enhance its relations with its constituents. Beasley (2010) reveals that "a rhetorical president will have little choice but to launch a public campaign to build perceived public support for a new program and thus put a particular kind of pressure on Congress" (p. 14). This pressure, as described in previous sections, is built upon the president's ability to rhetorically position a proposition. Although a claim is still contested, those who have rhetorically positioned themselves as being identified or consubstantial with the president do not need to exert as much effort in determining whether his claim is persuasive because (a) they have already defined the president as reasonable, and (b) the president and his audience share linkages in their worldviews.

Beasley's (2010) example reveals an element of the rhetorical presidency that at once becomes problematic: disagreement with Congress may be construed as a disagreement with the voters who elected those members of Congress. Here, identification works against the president, for those who deem the claims of their representatives as reasonable must then locate intersections of consensual knowledge that most resonate with their worldview. Recall that worldviews are

perceptions which cause a person to determine whether a president's claim is reasonable. Furthermore, in order to support their propositions, both the president and the member of Congress, who opposes him, must offer evidence that is acceptable to the worldviews of the voter.

Stuckey (2009) argues that "the more attention a president gives an issue, the more likely that issue is to receive coverage" (p. 29). This is due to media coverage of an issue where (a) the audience may find additional linkages of shared worldviews; (b) a propositional statement is proven through the weight of evidence that shifts the perspective of the audience; or (c) the rhetor ameliorates his/her position to better intersect with the worldviews of his/her audience. This last point is often difficult to accomplish, for it requires a presidential rhetor to be a 'student' of sorts of his audience. Positioned within society this way, a rhetorical president's interactions are best described as a social practice where messages are shaped to intersect with the worldviews of his audience. That practice is empowered and extended through a president's unique capacity to set an agenda at his prerogative (Neustadt, 1960; Tulis, 1987). However, as in the case of the Baltimore riots, sometimes events force a president to speak. Stuckey (2006) argues that a president's interpretations "carry more weight than those of any other political actor over the terms of national debates, and those debates very often do not occur on the national level without presidential participation" (p. 6). Here, the position of the rhetorical presidency is enhanced because of his ability to interact with the public and first interpret an issue or exigency that

arises in the course of his administration. This capacity is important if a president is able to persuade the public that his assessment of a "new" situation (something that has not already been rigorously evaluated) is reasonable. Certainly presidential interpretations of events and issues still undergo a process of intersubjective contestation, but an issue, still new to the minds of the audience, is open to interpretation by an executive who capitalizes on the opportunity to first interpret the relevance of events. This certainly does not mean that a president's interpretation may not be contested, for every proposition is continually contested as new variables present themselves. However, it does mean that parties who oppose a president's interpretation must work against the consensus achieved between the president and his audience. In this way, a rhetorical president who capitalizes on opportunities to form intersections of identification will present a strategic advantage over his opposition.

Describing the position of the rhetorical presidency using the precise terminology that the field of rhetoric has developed, offers a deeper and more complete understanding of how a rhetorical president impacts society. At the very heart of rhetorical theory is an understanding that language symbolically links humans together in groups that would not have been possible without the vehicle of language, writing, and communication systems. Hart (2008) explains that "because presidents often label things first—whipped inflation, a national malaise, the death tax—they *crystalize vague concepts* and thus put new issues on the national agenda" (p. 244). In this way, a president sets the national agenda by

raising national awareness of particular issues. He is further able to frame and label those issues conceptually because of his position to first speak about those issues. This is a powerfully significant position, for language is constructed with linguistic concepts that create interpretive frameworks for perceiving reality (Burke, 1969). By creating an associative vocabulary that ever imposes a worldview on a given issue, a president becomes the chief interpreter of the nation, for words, in their infectious ability to remain linguistically relevant, serve to position one's understanding of an issue. Certainly the capacity to create an associative vocabulary does not solely rest with the president, but because his opinion is heard more often on a given issue, he is able to construct the terminology that imposes a way of thinking about that issue. However, opposing politicians may also insert an associative terminology that influences how the public views the president propositions. Sarah Palin's "death panels" greatly impacted the public's perception of President Obama's national health care legislation. Even when Palin's argument (that the government would decide when to 'pull the plug' on an elderly or sick person's health care) was proven to be incorrect, her associative terminology persisted in shaping how many interpreted the Affordable Health Care Act.. The relevance of associative terminology occurs because linguistic symbols are extremely difficult to purge from the lexicon of vocabulary located within a person's mind, for language is fundamental to symbolic interpretations of events. Words, in their persistent utility and necessity, may only be reimagined but never fully removed once they

are adopted. More importantly, words, as vehicles for social interaction, cause people to view an issue together through a linguistic framework. In this way, a rhetorical president is not just the *chief interpreter* of exigencies and issues but is the *chief linguistic architect* of exigencies and issues.

A national identity is formed through the symbolic exposition of common ideals, values, and sensibilities within the backdrop of history. McKerrow (1993) explains "thoroughly historicized, the subject that acts does so as a being already interpellated within a set of social practices" (p. 56). As chief interpreter of the U.S. people, a president helps shape the national identity by locating shared social practices that define national character. Stuckey (2006) explains "no matter what the occasion, the country cannot interpret the meaning of events of national import without the president," thus "presidential interpretations are important elements in the national self-identity" (p. 6). Shaping national identity is thus achieved through the social practice of the rhetorical president who, through his interpretations of national events, shapes the identity of a nation. More precisely, a president interprets national events, which are comparatively rare in lived experience, in order to form consensual knowledge of that given issue. The formation of a consensual knowledge of national issues serves to coordinate perceptions and symbolic actions of the public. A president does not shape the nation's character through overt pressure and evangelistic exposition, for only national events of importance may achieve the necessary visibility in the public

that affords the president the opportunity of shaping public *assessment* of those events.

Because national identity is achieved through the vehicle of language, the defining constraint of the rhetorical president is to enhance the visibility of an issue by locating it within intersections of the shared worldviews of a nation. Stuckey (2004) explains the immense difficulty of such a project: "The United States has always been a complex nation, facing elements that work against a consensual national identity as well as those who support it" (p. 337). A president helps solidify a national identity by locating the salient intersections of cultural groups through speech. Through his repeated speech acts, a president works to unify national culture by articulating values which are central for a group of persons who reside in spheres of limiting, but ever growing, interconnectedness.

**A Rhetorical Presidency That Shifts Public Opinion**

I have thus far demonstrated the affordances offered to an executive within the practice of the rhetorical presidency, yet the possibility of his power is only realized by passing policies. A president enters office with the expectation that he will 'improve' the existing state of affairs on a national level through policy he deems important. The rhetorical presidency, as a social practice, seeks to persuade the public that his propositions are going to improve the state and enlists public support of those policies in order to pressure Congress to legislate his policy into law. Within the backdrop of the previously discussed rhetorical

dimensions of the rhetorical presidency, I will reveal the advantages and limitations of the project of shifting public opinion.

It is a complex and difficult task to motivate persons to alter their worldviews, and that task is complicated to the degree by which a person has not already formed an opinion on a national issue. A person's interests are precipitated by events within the sphere of his or her direct lived experience; thus, a person will become interested in an issue that is perceived to impact those lived experiences. With this notion in mind, a president's task is complicated upon the recognition that national issues are rarely immediately relevant to the day-to-day lives of the populace. G. C. Edwards (2008, 2009) asserts that this limitation undermines the possibility of the power of the rhetorical presidency in the sense that a president may not truly shift public opinion. Many scholars disagree and assert that although a presidential message may not have an immediate impact on the opinion of the populace, the power and prestige of executive office offer a president's policy a visibility that is enhanced through repeated and sustained speech acts with his national audience (Neustadt, 1960; Stuckey, 2009; Tulis, 1987). Hart (2008) exemplifies the range of disagreements with G. C. Edwards' position:

> However we study rhetorical effect, I doubt we will find, as did George Edwards, that presidential discourse falls on deaf ears. We may find that it falls on slow ears, for it often takes time for a president's remarks to insinuate themselves into the national mainstream. Presidential rhetoric probably falls on busy ears as well, for it is one of many inputs the average American deals with each day. (p. 247)

A president must symbolically construct, linguistically define, and persuasively interpret his policy as relevant to the lifeworld of his audience members, but this process may not be immediately achieved through a single speech act. My previous discussion of rhetorical theory reveals that G. C. Edwards (2009) is misled by his use of public opinion polls that measure the opinion immediately before and immediately after a president's speech on a given issue. G. C. Edwards (2012) uses Gallup and Pew polls as quantitative evidence for his assertion that "it is a mistake for presidents to assume they can lead the public" for "there is nothing to support this belief" (p. 9). G. C. Edwards errs by measuring the immediate impact of presidential messages by his utilization of public opinion polls, for a president promotes his policies throughout a continuum of speeches that may occur throughout the months and years of his administration. The negotiation of intersubjectively defined worldviews is a process that occurs over lengths of time that allow a person to determine whether a proposition is reasonable. Because of his preoccupation with immediate impacts of presidential messages, G. C. Edwards neglects to consider the very nature of what it means when constituents are part of a prolonged process of presidential communication that takes place throughout months and even years. The dynamics of presidential negotiations with his audience are far more complex than those implied by public opinion polls and are often not resolved within a single speech or within the comparatively limited time frame with which G. C. Edwards constrains presidential rhetoric.

While it is certain that public interest is constrained by the limitations of national issues, a president, through a continuum of speeches, will utilize the norms and cultural values of his audience in an effort to extend the relevance of an issue to his audience's worldview. Bostdorff (1994) explains "chief executives, as caretakers of the nation's highest office, can also easily draw on traditional U.S. values and historical examples to provide additional legitimation" (p. 6). In order to facilitate national consensus on his issue, a president must draw from his understanding of the values that help construct the worldviews of his audience, for social norms and values provide a framework for identification (Burke, 1969). Stuckey (2009) offers the case of Jimmy Carter's agenda setting of human rights as an important element in U.S. foreign policy:

> Both the U.S. public and media began to accept human rights as a legitimate area of concern, and while human rights will probably never be a leading issue on the national agenda, it has retained the status it gained during the Carter years. (p. 26)

President Carter argued for the adoption of his human rights policy by locating U.S. values of fairness and humane treatment, and through rigorous and sustained negotiation of the validity of his proposition through time, he gradually shifted the worldviews of the U.S. public and members of Congress. It is certainly the case that human rights were presented within the landscape of conversations that U.S. culture had been having about governmental policies that were considered to be incongruent with U.S. values. However, recall that the rhetorical president seeks to locate his policy in ways that intersect with the worldviews of his

audience, and Carter exemplifies the power of the rhetorical presidency through his successful reshaping of how U.S. foreign policy is formulated long after the end of his administration. Stuckey (2009) asserts that "an audience may be led incrementally to very different positions than those initially held," for "education and persuasion are both effects that may well be seen only in the long term" (p. 37). The example of Jimmy Carter's ability to motivate the public to pressure Congress to adopt a focus on human rights reveals the flaws in G. C. Edwards' (2012) argument: a president cannot adequately frame an issue in ways that shifts public opinion because "he faces committed, well-organized, and well-funded opponents who offer alternative frames, and many people do not perceive accurately the frames offered by the White House" (p. 79). While a president may face political opposition to his policies, the president nevertheless is able to interact with the public through a continuum of speech acts that enhance the visibility and acceptance of his policy. Furthermore, G. C. Edwards comes to this position through a quantitative analysis that utilizes opinion polls and thus dismisses the incremental changes that a president facilitates in U.S. society. A focus on the day-to-day shifts in public opinion represents a serious flaw in any scholarly work that wishes to interrogate the impact of presidential rhetoric over time, for such an enterprise dismisses the very process through which constituents are persuaded to adopt a particular argument.

Stuckey (2009) contradicts G. C. Edwards' position that the rhetorical president is unable to shift public opinion: "The evidence is that when presidents

strategically deploy their communication, they do have influence over the media agenda and can thus hope to have some impact on public opinion" (p. 128). While there are certainly wide ranges of rhetorical abilities of U.S. presidents, it is certain one must be a rhetorically savvy politician in order to be elected to our nation's highest office. A president will thus be able to rhetorically manage his agenda within the media in ways that address the strategies of his opposition—even Jimmy Carter, widely considered to be one of the least rhetorically savvy orators, was able to institute pervasive and persistent synoptic change in the area of U.S. foreign policy and human rights. Finally, the more realistic nature of a given proposition does eventually surface through the exposition and education of the public over time. Even Palin's pervasive 'death panel' terminology is now popularly considered to be a fabrication of the true nature of Obama's national healthcare legislation.

My arguments presented in this section reveal that the president's ability to shift public opinion represents a complex set of social practices. Stuckey (2006) asserts that Reagan's

> *Challenger* address provides powerful evidence of the workings of such rhetorical devices for the shaping of our public understanding of current events, for the public memory of those incidents, even long after they are past, and for the public understanding of the presidency and the people who hold that office. (p. 107).

Presidents are positioned to articulate and interpret events important to U.S. national identity; further, the public *demands* that presidents tell them how to respond and consider events that impact the people of the United States (K. K.

Campbell & Jamieson, 2008). While it is certain that those shifts may not immediately occur in ways that public opinion polls measure, the rhetorical presidency represents the potential to powerfully impact how the nation considers itself and the world.

## The Rhetorical Presidency and the Modern Media

Although forthcoming chapters of this dissertation will explore global communication infrastructures, an exhaustive definition of the rhetorical president would remain incomplete without discussing the means by which a president speaks to the U.S. public. The mass media creates a symbolic and physical environment with which the people develop a globalized understanding of life events (Hug, 2006; Maass, Rivera, & Hofman, 2006; Volkmer, 2006a). Maass and colleagues (2006) argue that "mass media generate communities of meaning, which are constituted by diverse groups of individuals that, without sharing the same place, time, or common information fields, share symbolic and personal experiences, memories, texts, and meanings" (p. 157). Thus, media infrastructures present coherent worldviews for individuals separated spatially, and while mediated connectivity may only resonate superficially in comparison to local culture, they do constitute disparate communities who might otherwise have little knowledge of each other (Volkmer, 2006b). Furthermore, the public becomes familiar with international political matters through coverage of those issues by the media, and while national values and interests define public perception, the media significantly influence public opinion of political issues (G.

C. Edwards, 2009). The age of media organizations is also marked by a rise of media personalities who aggressively interpret stories for their viewers. G. C. Edwards (2009) argues that reporters "no longer depend on those whom they interview to set the tone of their stories, and they now regularly pass sweeping (and frequently negative) judgments about what politicians are saying and doing" (p. 73). Although U.S. society is becoming increasingly interconnected through globalized media, a coherent explanation of their shared perceptions of the world becomes complicated when considering the predominance of a 24/7 news cycle and the personalities that interpret news for the body politic.

Media infrastructures present those who hold executive office significant advantages to reach millions of people. Tulis (1987) explains that "the modern mass media provides presidents the means to speak to millions of people throughout the world, giving them considerable aid to accomplish the worthwhile needs and purposes of the rhetorical presidency" (p. 188). The media significantly enhances the influence of presidential rhetoric, for while executive status and authority offers presidents the privilege to speak when, where, and upon topics of their choosing to a national and international audience, that privilege is only realized through symbolic contact with his audience. However, media corporations who are interested in promoting their popularity complicate influential presidential discourse. A recent report from the National Task Force on Presidential Rhetoric (Bostdorff et al., 2008) further complicates the notion of modern executive influence:

> When large media companies own a high number of media outlets, it is simply more cost efficient to have uniform programming that will appeal to as many individuals as possible. This means that popular presidents who provide interesting and entertaining messages are more likely to be heard—even if only in sound bite form—whereas less captivating presidential rhetors may find themselves shut out. (p. 363)

In a mass media environment, the rhetorical presidency becomes more important than ever, for while executive power is unrealized through the constitution, a president's rhetorical ability does thus constitute his power significantly (Neustadt, 1960; Tulis, 1987).

The prospect of the rhetorical presidency in a modern age of globally connected media environments thus offers considerable constraints on executive power for those who are less rhetorically adept. Likewise, a president, aided by global media infrastructure, may retain significant executive influence through his rhetorical talents; and through the advent of the Internet, presidential messages may impact how audiences consider presidential messages in ways that may not be truly understood for years to come. While the president does speak in a congested media environment, he remains a key arbitrator of how the nation regards the important national events that occur in his presidency (Bruner, 2005). Thus, the public will desire to seek out presidential messages in an effort to understand how events should be considered.

While a president addresses the concerns of a given issue at a particular time, he runs the risk of being viewed as inconsistent at best and unreliable at worst, and a president must always be perceived as credible in order to press his

policy initiatives. Neustadt (1960) explains that the "prevalent impression of a President's public standing tends to set a tone and to define the limits of what Washingtonians do for him, or do to him" (p. 87). Because a president must locate the values of his audience in order to press his policies and administrative agenda, perceived incongruences may be viewed as disagreements with U.S. values.

Finally, the digital media environment forces a rhetorical president to manage his image in one particular instance, in a campaign for example, and maintain that image throughout the years of his presidencies. Laudatory and passionate promises to pass policy that fail upon his election to office will paint the president as incapable. Indyk, Lieberthal, and O'Hanlon (2012) explain the implications of this risk:

> While inspirational words have their place in politics, there is a threshold beyond which aspirations become false hopes—and the conveyor of those visions sets himself up for resentment and a sense of betrayal on he part of those who once believed in him. (p. 267)

Thus, while the media presents the president with opportunities to audio visually access millions, that access presents a clear danger to a president political capital if his credibility becomes undermined.

## Rhetorical Diplomacy

Stated in simple terms, rhetorical diplomacy is an extension of the rhetorical presidency—it uses similar rhetorical tools to communicate with

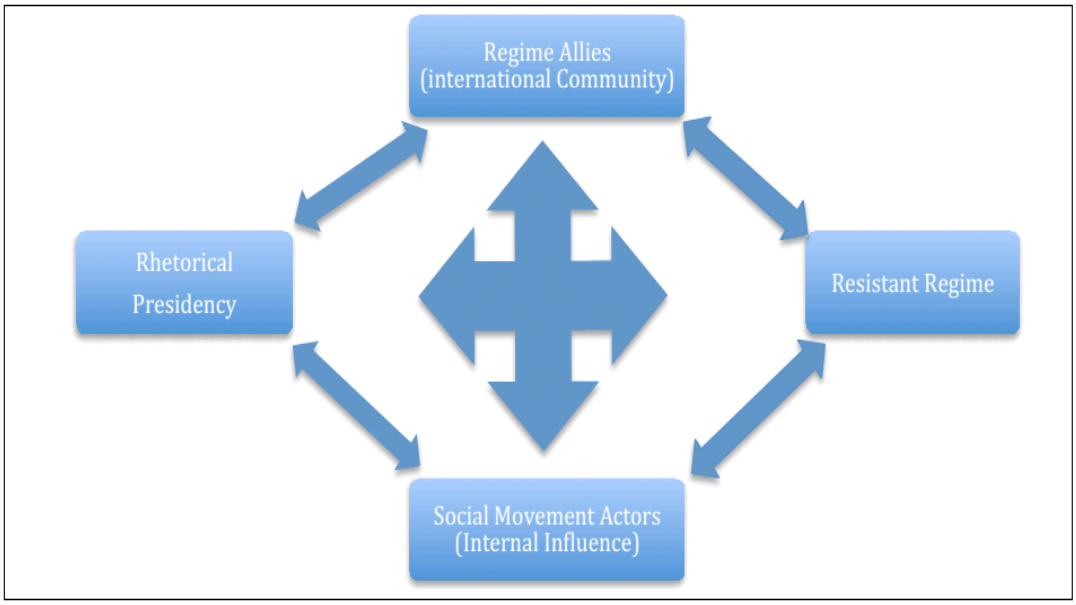


*Figure 1.* Rhetorical diplomacy: Creating alliances and pressuring resistant regimes.

audiences abroad but it presses foreign policies which are important to the security, economic, and political interests of the United States. In subsequent chapters, I will describe rhetorical diplomacy more fully by dissecting the foreign policy of presidents Clinton, Bush, and Obama. In essence, rhetorical diplomacy takes advantage of political and rhetorical powers of speech and prestige to persuade international audiences to adopt U.S. foreign policies. Figure one reveals how rhetorical diplomacy influences a resistant regime by appealing to allies of the resistant regime with whom the United States has political or economic relationships. In the rhetorical diplomacy paradigm the president encounters a resistant regime or government who refuses to pass or adopt U.S. policy. Remember some of those policies may include human rights, democracy,

gender equality, etc. In order to press a regime a president then must form alliances with two parties: the first are those with whom the resistant regime is allied. This is commonly accomplished by influencing trade associations or regional associations with whom the U.S. has alliances and who then may force the resistant regime to acquiesce to U.S. demands. The second group are those social movement actors within the resistant governments country who press the regime internally. I have defined this entity as "internal influence" for the sake of continuity, for while a president often assists a social movement, he or she may influence indigenous citizens more broadly who may not be affiliated with a social movement. Forming alliances with an indigenous social movement legitimizes U.S. intrusion into the sovereign affairs of another nation. I contend that the most effective means to persuade a resistant leader to acquiesce to U.S. demands is by assisting a mobilized popular social movement—it is unlikely that a U.S. president will otherwise have the requisite rhetorical appeal.

Democratic Social movements also gain more power as the United States president elevates their credibility through his speeches. In turn defending an embattled but popular social movement allows the president to actively press other nations to pressure the resistant regime. Thus, as figure 1 reveals, the alliance formation between the U.S. and external and internal entities often work in tandem as a particular social movement gains more visibility in the world community through U.S. support. As the social movement gains more prominence in the world community, the U.S. in turn receives more approval

from the world community and regime allies. Thus, rhetorical diplomacy facilitates institution building.

Rhetorical diplomacy is different than diplomacy. Figure 2 reveals how diplomacy comprises those engagement directly between two entities - sometimes with an intermediary assisting with talks between U.S. and another nation. It is usually a direct way of negotiating an issue or treaty with a foreign entity. When the president encounters a resistant regime hostile to U.S. policy, sometimes direct engagement is not possible. Rhetorical diplomacy is an institution building effort through which influence is extended by creating alliances with a nation's allies and with certain members of a nation's populace, such as social movements. Rhetorical diplomacy is also empowered by an interlocutor's

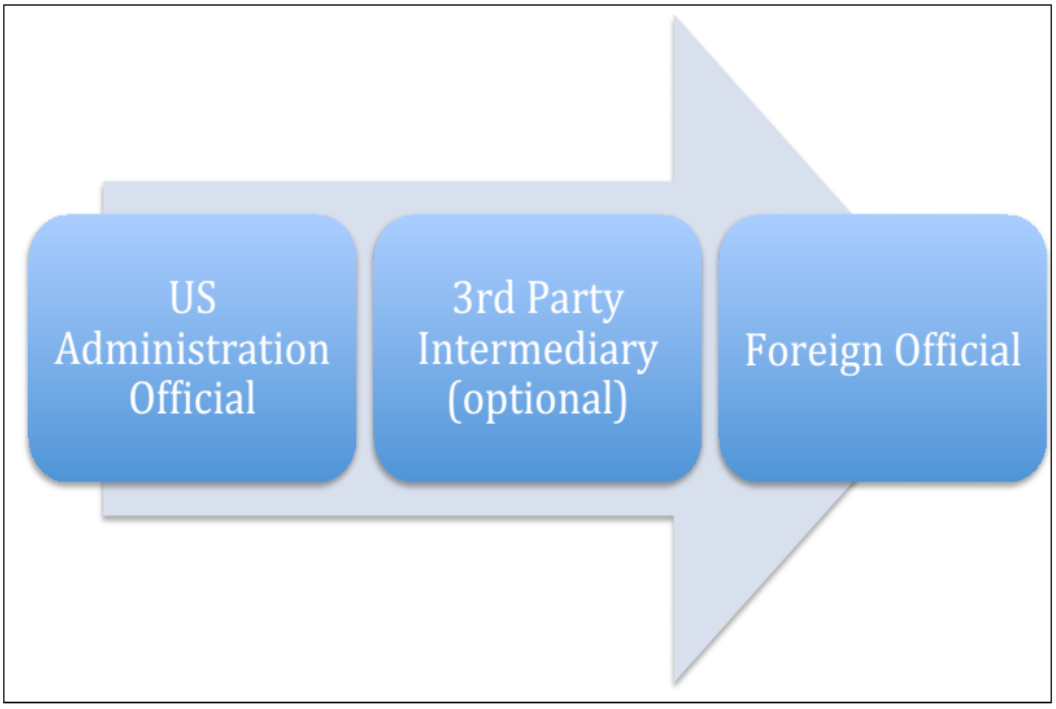


*Figure 2*. Diplomacy Diagram.

recognition of kairos, the "opportune moment" where the alliances forged by U.S. administrations are effectively used to press a resistant regime to adopt U.S. policy As Figure 2 reveals, the diplomatic efforts that occur between two nations does not adequately describe the full extent of institution building, alliance formation, and the advantage of seizing opportune moments of influence that takes place over months and years. Rhetorical diplomacy is a more complex process of enhancing U.S. influence with those who are initially hostile to U.S. policy.

While there has always been diplomatic efforts by presidents to their international partners, globalization in a post-Cold War world has made presidential diplomacy a key feature of U.S. international relations. While the military power of the United States is unmatched, it cannot solve the world's problems alone, and it can not solve the world's problems primarily through the use of force. Simply put, rhetorical diplomacy, as explained through the theories of communicative and rhetorical action, comprises the alliance building measures, through speeches, sanctions, and so forth, which the president uses to compel foreign actors to promote U.S. foreign-policy interests. Rhetorical diplomacy is similar to the domestic rhetorical presidency, for its promulgation and success stems from the rhetorical lessons learned by political actors domestically—which prepares them to use those rhetorical abilities as they engage the world. The rhetorical diplomacy is an extension of the rhetorical presidency in the sense that it employs a similar method of pressing a president's

policy. It follows a similar model sidestepping Congress (in the international case a foreign leader) and persuading a constituency (a regime's own people and it's allies) to press legislators to pass a president's policy. Another way of looking at rhetorical diplomacy is that the political milieu of U.S. domestic politics acts as a sort of rhetorical education for presidents who then encounter a complex and ever globalizing world. The same constraints and the advantages the president has domestically are magnified when he speaks internationally.

In many ways, a traveling president has more prestige, greater popularity, in encounters less contention than he would were he speaking to domestic audiences. There are several reasons for this: firstly, the president is the elite leader of an elite nation that has significant military prowess, cultural capital, and economic power. As the self-proclaimed defenders of freedom and democracy, the United States promotes a model that developing nations, through democracy, may advance its wealth and status. Secondly, as the president travels abroad, he has the authority to both punish and reward nations for acquiescing to U.S. requests—thus, when he speaks his ideas to an audience, they recognize that he is able to follow through on his promises. Finally, rhetorical diplomacy affords presidents the opportunity to speak to foreign audiences, when invited, and speak on any subject—and his foreign audience may listen on radios, televisions, and computers to hear what he says about their nation.

*Kairos* is the final element that travels throughout rhetorical diplomacy, for there is a recognition that regardless of the alliances one has built, some

regime actors are rather impervious to U.S. pressure—even when the U.S. has crippled a regime's economy by mobilizing the world community to enact sanctions. *Kairos*, or the opportune moment, reveals the notion that there are moments when a nation is particularly susceptible to pressure from the United States, Regime allies, and internal social movement actors. K. K. Campbell and Jamison (2008) explain *kairos*: "their opportunity is an illustration of *kairos*, the ancient concept developed by the Greek sophists to delineate the special moment of opportunity in which one can make the fitting gesture" (p. 333). An opportunity for a president to apply pressure in effective ways may not come everyday, or even in a decade, but a president's sense of rhetorical diplomacy should cause him to recognize when to best exert pressure. Natural disaster, threats from more powerful neighboring countries, internal upheaval, famine, and so forth, may present opportunities for a president to best utilize alliances in order to pressure a resistant regime to adopt U.S. policy.

Rhetorical diplomacy facilitated through *kairos*, is more able to create alliances at certain times with regime allies that elevate the ineptitude, the cruelty, and the instability of regime to the point where continued association may no longer be attractive to a regime's allies. Rhetorical diplomacy seizes this new opportunity and forges alliances, against a resistant regime, which were previously hindered because of sense of loyalty, treaty, or other partnerships which then become unpalatable.

*Kairos* is central to rhetorical diplomacy as an effective guiding tool for presidents for constructing speeches designed to be most effective for a particular audience. Pernot (2005) explains this idea more fully:

> In addition there are subsidiary, but not unimportant factors, like familiarity with the different types of speech, the combination of natural talents, of knowledge and practice, the ability to discern the opportune moment (*kairos*), the care for composing the speech as a "living being," so that it is a valid and organic whole. If all these conditions are met, then the speech will be valid. (p. 51)

Pernot describes the immediacy of the speech—how a speaker dynamically senses and understands an audience, capitalizing on the right moment which will persuade them. I argue much is the same for a president who travels abroad seeking to persuade those who resist democratic reform and commit human rights abuses in order to stay in power. While globalization, on which I will expound at length later, is attractive to a resistant regime who desires more wealth, clinging to power is often the status quo for despotic leaders who may be unwilling to endanger their prestige and status in exchange for more ambiguous benefits of globalization.. They form alliances with partners who do not wish to pressure the regime in the way the United States, but occasionally, there are moments when that power falters, when a regime becomes desperate to survive or sees mounting and violent internal revolution and is more receptive to U.S. engagement. In this way, rhetorical diplomacy should be conducted as an organic whole, sensing when and how to pressure a regime to reform.

Finally, *kairos*, beyond the implications of dealing with resistant regimes, should teach presidents that there opportune moments to press policy in ways which may be more successfully than other times in a world community which may not be particular hostile to U.S. leadership. *Kairos* cuts both ways: a president may alienate alliances by proposing policy that ignores events on the ground that would limit positive reception of U.S. policy. While I am not advocating that the president must sit on the sidelines, there are more opportune moments to present ideas to the world community than others, which facilitate alliances rather that limit them.

When the president travels abroad and speaks to foreign audiences, and they listen, there is some sort of impact occurring as the result of hearing that speech. The impact of a speech may be unclear, however, without the sort of field research results I discuss in the latter parts of this dissertation. A president's words matter because they help create social knowledge about the United States and a greater global community, which may previously be shapeless without a president's speech acts. A president, speaking to multiple world audiences, also helps build consensus around ideas central to the global community. Further, rhetorical diplomacy may be an ideal method of alliance building, because in a globalized world a president is more easily recognized, more often listen to, and no one else is more respected or more revered than the traveling president of the United States. Although rhetorical ineptitude or self-inflicted political wounds, such as caustic and hegemonic rhetoric, may undermine this pre-judicial respect,

admiration, and potential, rhetorical diplomacy affords the president with an advantage that few heads of state presently retain in an economically interdependent world.

Through a history of campaigning and pressuring Congress through public appeal, presidents have expanded the communication apparatuses of the presidency and have worked diligently to improve the communication methods through which they seek to persuade their domestic audiences. Likewise, presidents have expanded communication apparatuses to improve the communication methods through which they use to try to persuade their international audiences. Those same communication resources were utilized abroad as the United States became the sole military superpower in the post-Cold War globalized world. As the victors of the Cold War, the United States also had a hand in negotiating how it would shape how globalization took form. Armed with legions of ambassadorial personnel, unparalleled communication resources, and tried by the fires of U.S. political discourse, the president is uniquely positioned to persuade an international audience. This dissertation seeks to describe how presidents were able to use their advantages in order to persuade foreign actors acquiesce to their demands. This dissertation, therefore, analyzes both the rhetorical ability and the political strategy only of the post-Cold War Clinton, Bush, and Obama Administrations.

When a president speaks to a foreign audience, he does so in the backdrop of behind-the-scenes negotiations, potential rewards for his audience's

agreement with his policy, and, likewise, potential retaliation for his audience's disagreement with his policy. Thus, rhetorical diplomacy is unlike other speaking occasions—a president who speaks is the embodiment of a soldier, a banker, a caregiver, and a cultural icon all wrapped up into one person. While the United States remains the leader of the globalized world, a president's authority to engage with foreign leaders is unmatched.

Rhetorical diplomacy, as enacted by presidents, persuades various audiences through rhetorical actions that are very similar to those used by presidents domestically. International rhetorical actions are more versatile: firstly, when meeting a resistant leader (one who defies U.S. foreign policy such as human rights, democracy, etc.), a president may defend a social movement battling against the resistant leader and further popularize it both internationally and locally, and that social movement may then be empowered to persuade the resistant leader to acquiesce to U.S. foreign-policy demands. Secondly, the president who meets a resistant leader may also speak to that nation's economic and/or political alliances and persuade them to pressure the resistant leader. Thirdly, the president may offer rewards for capitulation and threats when his demands are resisted—those threats are heeded because the president may actually carry out those threats through sanctions or military force. Finally, the president may send his ambassadors months or even years in advance to speak with a resistant leader and lay groundwork before the speaking moment that then further presses the leader to acquiesce. The president speaking to his domestic

audience would never have the same affordances of international engagement, nor would he face the same kind of political competition as he does from his political opponents in Congress. Thus, rhetorical diplomacy presents the president with opportunities to shape the globalized world, engage in foreign policy issues, and those successes abroad may then elevate his prestige domestically.

Because of the president's advantages internationally, it is sometimes the case that when faced with severe and caustic political opposition to his policies at home, the president will turn to the international arena where he is afforded more liberty to negotiate and decide on important matters of foreign affairs. An embattled president may raise his political appeal by succeeding in international affairs when he would otherwise fail in domestic affairs. While no other political authority in the United States is constitutionally authorized to negotiate with other heads of state, the president holds unique authority in the realm of foreign affairs. Thus, rhetorical diplomacy holds considerable appeal for U.S. presidents, and this appeal will likely increase if the political environment in the United States becomes more caustic and more contentious.

## Public Memory and the International Audience

A discussion of public memory and mediated information is fundamental to a comprehensive examination of rhetorical diplomacy. Presidents popularize their policy initiatives by expressing how their policy reflects a community's values, and they often rely on epideictic rhetoric that demonstrates to their

constituents how their policies concur with communal values. Thus, an examination of how public memory is epideictically constructed and communicated is necessary to the larger discussion of the management of U.S. international identity. Exploration into the ways international audiences are constituted is important to a comprehensive exploration of the international rhetorical presidency, for as a president maintains considerable rhetorical power abroad, he is also constrained by the composition of his diverse audiences.

Rhetors construct public memory in epideictic speeches to foster adherence to their messages through an audience's understanding of its past, present, and its future (Bodnar, 1992). Mediated perceptions of the world through communication and information technology also provide the U.S. president with an audience which has informed opinions about the world beyond its borders. Furthermore, presidential discourse may encounter an audience negatively predisposed toward U.S. presidents and their foreign policy initiatives (G. C. Edwards, 2009). The task of constituting an audience thus involves appropriating a country's history by offering principles and values that are most salient with his present audience. The audience is evoked as a president elevates certain intersections of U.S. interests and those of his audience—in doing so a president constructs the rhetorical space where his policies are acceptable to his audience. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (2008) explain:

> Instead of believing in a universal audience, analogous to the divine mind which can only assent to the "truth," we might, with greater justification, characterize each speaker by the image he himself holds of the universal

> audience that he is trying to win over to his view. Everyone constitutes the universal audience from what he knows of his fellow man, in such a way as to transcend the few opposition he is aware of. (p. 33)

Audience in this case is constructed in the sense that, although the president addresses a real audience, he locates or concentrates on universal values that broadly define his international audience. In this sense, an audience is constituted and evoked within the confines of his speech—an audience is rhetorically constructed when a president locates ideal recipients of his message.

Rhetors construct public memory to reveal how their messages coalesce with shared values, histories, and resonant humanity. Kumar, Hug, and Rusch (2006) explain the elements of public memory:

> All memories are, in essence, social constructions of the past, no matter how recent or remote. Memories are, after all, a retelling, from different perspectives, of personal history/biography. They are, in other words, a reconstruction of subjective reality, a personal looking back at what was or what could have been. (p. 219)

While subjective and inherently flexible, public memory becomes useful for leaders who wish to construct their vision of a shared past, and by elucidating characteristics of an audience's deeply-felt collective identity, a presidential rhetor may powerfully promote his agenda (Bodnar, 1992). Bodnar (1992) explains that "memory adds perspective and authenticity to the views articulated in this exchange; defenders of official and vernacular interests are selectively retrieved from the past to perform similar functions in the present" (p. 15). Thus, memory becomes a powerful tool for epideictic rhetoric because it reveals a shared past in emotionally powerful ways, and by revealing a common bond, a

president becomes more than a visiting speaker, he becomes part of a discursive narrative of the body politic (Bodnar, 1992).

Epideictic oratory is a dominant form of speech in the rhetorical presidency and is well suited to constructing public memory (Parry-Giles & Parry-Giles, 2000). Epideictic speeches endeavor to create a memory of a shared past, and by reconstituting the past, presidents selectively affirm principles that are consistent with their political philosophy. This becomes important when speaking to international audiences, for even ceremonial aspects of epideictic rhetoric become launching points for presidential policy (Parry-Giles & Parry-Giles, 2000). K. K. Campbell and Jamieson (2008) explain that "praise and blame, the key strategies in ceremonial discourse, can be used ideologically to lay groundwork for policy initiatives" (p. 48). Epideictic rhetoric endeavors to remind audiences of important features of their collective identity, as well as societal features of governance and political structure. Murphy (2003) explains that "epideictic rhetoric, then, shapes the world that provides the backdrop of values and beliefs, heroes and villains, triumphs and tragedies against which and through which deliberative and forensic judgment are made in a ceaseless swirl of discourse" (p. 610). Presidents therefore construct a shared past in order to issue forth foreign policy initiatives that constitutively agree with the communal values and beliefs of his listener. Epideictic oratory thus becomes a way for presidents to construct and communicate U.S. identity.

Presidents rhetorically construct their power and authority by first demonstrating how their ideology fits with the shared values of the collective. Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles (2000) further explain the importance of public memory and rhetorical power:

> As presidents strive to effectively and epideictically express the community's values in the service of a decision or policy, they often invoke historically derived arguments, examples, commonplaces, or topoi-employing collective memory to convince and persuade. In so doing, presidents occupy a central role in the struggle to define collective memory. By utilizing collective memories for political purposes, presidents offer an interpretation or understanding of that collective memory that carries considerable authority and legitimacy in U.S. culture. (p. 420)

In the international arena, public memory helps presidential rhetors in their diplomatic efforts to win allies and maintain international friendships, and in an increasingly globalized world, epideictic constructions of shared values are important for interests that rely on friendly international relations, such as human rights, commerce and national security. By demonstrating how international norms are shared by their globally diverse audiences, presidents thus create a collective global identity where the defense of American interests constitutes a defense of the world community's interests.

**Social Movements and U. S. Involvement in Foreign Affairs**

As the prime negotiator and creator of foreign policy, the president becomes vested with powers that directly influence the direction of the United States abroad. Certainly the ever-growing trend toward globalization reveals that the president's ability to communicate U.S. interests has a direct impact upon

national security, finance, trade, and a host of other areas which are critical for the future prosperity of the United States. From a foreign policy perspective, a president is constituted both by the resonate values of the U.S. culture, as well as the founding political doctrine that gave rise to U.S. democracy (Greenstein, 2009; Hook & Spanier, 2010; Young, 2008). Presidential interaction with the world is therefore guided by U.S. interests which inform foreign policy discourse (Hook & Spanier, 2010; Young, 2008). Modern foreign policy initiatives reflect the exigencies of preserving national security and extending U.S. influence through the assistance of social movements.

The Founding Fathers built U.S. democracy upon Enlightenment principles, that in theory sought to expand the freedoms of U.S. citizens. The founding philosophy of the United States becomes important to future manifestations of foreign affairs, for it directly relates to the utilization of tropes that purport to defend democracy abroad (Hook & Spanier, 2010; Young, 2008). United States rhetoric scholar Marilyn Young (2008) defines the relationship between foreign policy and U.S. political values: "this was society committed in principle to justice and freedom for all. It was an ambitious, moral enterprise, and 'American values' were cast in universal language, which referred to all humanity, not just Americans" (p. 165). In many presidential speeches to the global community, presidents use tropes of democracy to communicate American identity to assist and defend social movement leaders who share similar U.S. values—this perhaps explains why the United States involves itself in the affairs

of sovereign states to defend embattled social movements. Furthermore, the constitutive identity of the U.S. president therefore explains how tropes of democracy remain at the forefront of many communicative interactions with the global community. For example, throughout the Cold War and beyond, U.S. presidents defended military actions abroad by lauding universal and individual rights, while those military actions in many ways sought to only secure U.S. interests at the expense of a nation's sovereignty (Dryzek, 2006; Young, 2008). Aiding social movement also assures international audiences that U.S. foreign relations are beneficial; thus, aiding social movements help presidential rhetors create a perception of goodwill.

Aiding an organized social movement also gives the U.S. voice a kind of legitimacy that it otherwise could not possibly obtain, for rather than be perceived to be motivated by its own interests, the United States comes to the defense of an embattled social movement who needs the help of an outside party. Aiding a social movement also gives the United States positive publicity in the international arena for helping achieve the goals of social movements which often experienced political repression. Finally, in a post-cold war globalizing world, regime change and political interference are not acceptable forms of form policy negotiation, for the United States must have political partners on the ground who are seen as legitimate agents of positive social change. Gone are the days of sacrificing the moral high ground of the United States in exchange for strategic interests. A rhetorical diplomacy that non-violently assists popular social

movements within states who resist U.S. policy may hold the key to extending U.S. power beneficially without seeming hegemonic or power hungry.

The advent of a globalized, interconnected, and cooperative community of nations has also given rise to social movements who demand greater human rights and progressive change from their leaders. In *The Future of Global Relations: Crumbling Walls, Rising Regions,* Paupp (2009) asserts:

> At the dawn of the 21st century, we find that on every major continent of the world there are emerging regional centers of power characterized by new and more inclusive regional organizations that are evolving toward new levels of complexity and maturity. (p. xvi)

These regional organizations may pose either a challenge to U.S. leadership in foreign affairs or could position the United States as having a greater hand in shaping the globalized world, but U.S. leadership can only gain legitimacy if it is viewed as being a positive resource for human rights, gender equality, and other popular democratic ideals. United States leadership will be met with resistance if it is seen as promoting its own interests over those needs and values of native populations. However, the United States is not the nexus of altruism—authority in foreign affairs will enable the United States to shape and control how the world globalized and thus its place in that globalized future. Thus, there are clear and obvious benefits to assisting social movements, and even if there are no immediate strategic benefits for aiding a social movement, a positive world image gives the United States greater overall authority to influence the world

community. Nations have a choice whether to bend to U.S. leadership—and they must see that leadership is being beneficial to their own interests.

Aiding social movements then becomes a way that the United States can both dispose of a resistant foreign actor while simultaneously gaining the approval of that leader's constituency. As rhetorical diplomacy assists a popular and embattled social movement, the United States gains political capital that it could not otherwise earn—by both the native population of that country and by other nations who have voiced support for that social movement. If the United States assists a social movement in successfully rising to power as well, the United States may find loyal allies who view U.S. leadership as both beneficial and necessary. While rhetorical diplomacy is in the business of pressing U.S. interests, it does so by aiding a social movement which is viewed as willing to carry out those interests when in power or rhetorical diplomacy assists a social movement in pressing the regime to reform and carry out U.S. interests without a violent change in leadership. Rising to speak in the international forum to speak in defense of social movements through administration officials, Rhetorical diplomacy aligns a president with a movement who may then become emboldened to overthrow the regime, earn the respect of a nation's people, and sustain their fight against the regime because the United States is on their side. I heard many people in conversation in Burma say that the knowledge that the United States is on their side sustained them through decades of struggle and consistently elevated their morale.

Thus, by aligning itself with a popular social movement, United States is then positioned to contain nations whom they deem threatening their national security, economic interests, and political influence. Of course, the added benefit of coming to the aid of social movements through rhetorical actions means also that those nations whom we wish to contain cannot claim that they are under threat by our military. In essence, aiding a popular social movement, even meddling in the domestic affairs of another nation through the CIA and other entities, means that if the social movement is sincere in its desire to help their people, the United States will have a lasting positive image in that nation—and the rewards for aiding that population will extend long into the future. Lastly, aiding democratic social movements bring stability to the community of nations. McFaul (2010) argues that "Democracies do not go to war with each other" (p. 58), for "populations in democracies can hold their leaders more accountable than those in autocracies regarding the costs of war" (pp. 58-59). Every U.S. military engagement in the last 100 years has been with a non-democratic regime. Helping a democratic social movement may help achieve the sort of stability the world needs in order to sustain a global economic trading system.

**Social Movements, Rhetorical Diplomacy, and Global Media**

The mass media creates a symbolic and physical environment with which a president may locate a globalized understanding of life events through his construction of public memory (Hug, 2006; Maass et al., 2006; Volkmer, 2006b). Media Studies scholar Ingrid Volkmer (2006a) explains that "new technologies

enable simulcasting [for instance via CNN]—distributing crucial national affairs to the national as well as the global audience" (p. 255). World knowledge and world perception become important factors in the mediation between the local world and global world, for the globally connected media environment constructs a symbolic relationship between the self and the world (Volkmer, 2006b). Maass and colleagues (2006) argue that "mass media generate communities of meaning, which are constituted by diverse groups of individuals that, without sharing the same place, time, or common information fields, share symbolic and personal experiences, memories, texts, and meanings" (p. 157). Thus, a globalized media infrastructure offers a platform for individuals separated spatially, and while mediated connectivity may only resonate superficially in comparison to local culture, they can constitute the identity of disparate communities who might otherwise have little knowledge of each other (Volkmer, 2006b). Furthermore, this constitutive perception of the world is necessary for the globalization process and for "participation in the global public sphere within a global civil society" (Volkmer, 2006a, p. 258).

A congested media environment also presents significant constraints for a president's construction of public memory. Although the U.S. president certainly benefits from U.S. information, communication, and entertainment infrastructure, presidential scholar G. C. Edwards (2009) contends "the president communicates with the public in a congested communication environment clogged with competing messages from a wide variety of sources, through a wide

range of media, and on a staggering array of subjects" (p. 96). Thus, information and communication technology may certainly aid a president in international public address, yet his rhetorical advantage becomes complicated by the enormity of the communication and information technology infrastructure.

Presidents who have a negative international image may be constrained by how an international audience receives a president's speech. Presidential scholar Richard Neustadt (1960) reveals how the collective perceptions of a president impact rhetorical power: "His bargaining advantages in seeking what he wants are heightened or diminished by what others think of him. They do not see alone, they see together. What they think of him is likely to be much affected by the things they see alike" (p. 63). A president must therefore become a caretaker of his nation's image, for the determining collective preconceptions of an audience may undermine his credibility well before he discursively engages them. Likewise, an audience who is uninterested and uninformed presents significant opportunities for persuasion; those who are unaware of how a president's message impacts their values and interests are less likely to reject his argument. G. C. Edwards (2009) reveals that "even if their predispositions make them sympathetic to the president's arguments, they may lack the understanding to make the connection between the president's argument and their own underlying values," for "the more abstract the link between message and value, the fewer people who will make the connection" (p. 74). Thus, tasked with the creation of public memory, a presidential rhetor must endeavor to make concrete connections

between U.S. foreign policy and the shared values, history, and interests of his audience.

A global media environment offers embattled social movement leaders the opportunity to publicize the ideals of their social movement by revealing how the government views their leaders and members. The present media environment is ideal for these sorts of visual appeals as news corporations seek crises and sensational news events to increase viewership. Holliday (2011) maintains "with rapid advances in information and communication technology that sought crises in hitherto hidden in mysterious parts of the world begin to flash across television and computer screens, it triggered a significant reorientation of theoretical debate" (pp. 124-125). Gradually, the global institutions have begun to address broader global welfare alongside the more traditional economic and security concerns. Taking advantage in a shift toward human rights, extended by the global media, social movements are then able to elicit support from the U.S. government as citizens and representatives voice their public support and pressure the administration to act. In way, a social movement takes advantage of the communication infrastructure that allows presidents to influence the international community, and, by appealing to a president's constituency, a social movement gains the support of an executive who may otherwise be less inclined to involve himself in a social movement, which poses little strategic importance for the United States.

Social movements are also able to elicit attention to their cause because the media has increasingly created the perception of a global community through their telling of stories, images, and metaphors that humanize an otherwise desperate community of nations, cultures, and peoples (Lule, 2014, p. 366). This perception of a global community fuels the importance of human rights as members of the global community refuse to tolerate the oppression and abuse of other nations beyond their borders. Although a "global community" in any kind of media environment is inherently imagined, the images of starvation, bloodshed, and oppression of "innocents" appeal to the empathy and a sense of communal identity as a human being.

Therefore, situated within this imagined global community, created in part by social media and professional media organizations, the communication technology affordances availed to social movement leaders to "go global" with their political or social viewpoints are vast. Schattle (2014) explains "political elites and everyday citizens everywhere are using new media to navigate and renegotiate their relationships in the global age" (p. 117). New media, in this context simply means Internet enhanced communication infrastructures that allow users to understand foreign cultures and possibly engage with them in an asynchronous environment. It is not simply that media allows social movement actors to receive public attention; more important is the display of violations of the norms and values held by members of a global community who are able to identify with the plight of these social movement actors. It is too simple to say

that "the world has gotten smaller," for it really has not. It is that U.S. citizens have included other parts of the world into their calculus of what the world is—they have a grasp of the shape of the world, and thus have a stake in the stability of a world they share with other peoples of the world. Furthermore, a sense of a common humanity is critical for social movement, and although human rights are not presently controversial to the United States, prior to the Carter administration, coming to the defense rights was not a central element of U.S. foreign policy, for the U.S. government or the U.S. people (Stuckey, 2009).

Social media, like Facebook with one billion plus membership, offers social movement actors to spread their messages and images online in order to promote and organize political revolutions (Crothers, 2014). As social movement actors publicize violations of human rights, they contest the legitimacy of their government. An embattled social movement then seeks out the assistance of foreign actors to pressure their government to capitulate through rhetorical action or through requests for military intervention, as was the case in Libya with the Qaddafi regime. Schimmelfennig (2001) explains:

> Rhetorical action would not be effective if the actors were not concerned with their credibility and legitimacy as community members, and they would not be concerned if they did not, to some extent, identify themselves and link their political existence with the community. (p. 65)

Dictators who seek isolation and remove themselves from the international community may successfully resist rhetorical actions brought forth by foreign entities on behalf of social movements within their country, yet they do so at

considerable cost: removed from the global trading network, the capacity to improve their economy is limited.

The economic advantages of globalization often make attempts at isolation unpalatable to most governments, and because human rights have become a central issue with consumers, shaming and sanctions are effective tools used by social movements who appeal to the global community. New media creates a circle of influence created by the appeal of globalization, the perceived power of the U.S. president, and the adherence to communal values. Oppressive regimes, who desire the financial benefits of global commerce, open themselves to the pressure exerted by rhetorical action—if they had no desire for international trade and were not compelled by the desire for greater wealth, they would remain immune to rhetorical action. Likewise, the rhetorical powers of the U.S. president are predicated upon the need for the United States, as a political leader, as a trading partner, and as a rhetorical force whose influence may potentially wreak havoc on an abusive regime. A president will have little influence on the actions of a regime which is not imperiled by the rhetorical actions of a president that either directly confront that regime or indirectly seek to influence the behavior of the regime through his pressure on the regime's allies. Finally, when new media reveals to the global community how a certain regime has violated their social norms and values citizens insist that their government, transnational corporations, and nongovernmental organizations move to act against regimes who violate human rights.

However, it is too simplistic to assert that were it not for significant vocal support for human rights by U.S. citizens, presidents, corporations, and (some) nongovernmental organizations would not feel compelled to act against oppressive regimes. Wiarda (2006) explains:

> The United States began to realize in the early 1980s, following Jimmy Carter's earlier romantic and idealistic policy of human rights that was too often self-defeating, that a hardheaded democracy/human rights agenda could be used a way of destabilizing the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact countries. (p. 173).

Wiarda reveals the central intersection between U.S. foreign policy and social movements, for while social movements desire to reform their government, the United States strategically benefits by destabilizing an enemy. Rhetorical diplomacy in defense of human rights presents both an opportunity for a sitting president to bolster his image domestically and internationally while achieving strategic foreign policy objectives. In this way, the defense of human rights is used to expand the sphere of influence of the United States internationally (Hancock, 2007). As I will reveal in greater detail in subsequent chapters, social movement actors may receive presidential assistance that derives from multiple motives, the least of which may be from a sense of moral obligation—even if a president's articulation of his foreign policy is positioned through an adherence of human rights values. This constraint helps explain why social movement actors are able to successfully take their movement to a global forum more effectively than ever before.

Various social media platforms, the news media industry, and asynchronous Internet communications seemingly offer opportunities for social movement actors to organize domestically, yet the Internet also affords authoritarian regimes the ability to control the flow of information in new and profound ways. Schattle (2014) explains:

> Technological advances have also made it easier for authoritarian states from Russia to Saudi Arabia to Myanmar to silence pesky bloggers using software programs that filter Internet content and "denial-of-service" attacks, making the targeted computers or web servers temporarily unavailable. (p. 118)

The Internet, then, is not a panacea of free communication that it seems to be; in embattled places like Burma it has been difficult for pro-democratic leaders to communicate for fear that members could be identified. In a recent interview (2015) I conducted in Burma with Khun Than Lwin, the Chairman of the Shan State National League for Democracy, he reported that "we don't have too much technology" and because of this "the main thing they have to get messages to Radio Free Asia and BBC Asia" by emailing reporters (see Appendix A). An embattled social movement will find the prospect of openly communicating with members far too dangerous while it gains momentum, for the government may easily intercept text, twitter, and potentially facebook messages. While leaders may find it dangerous to directly communicate with their members, they have ways to co-opt the radio transmissions of RFA and VOA to communicate with their members via email. However, several leaders of the Burmese pro-democracy movement say that most of their inter-organizational

communications had to be top secret—the Internet is too insecure. In this way, media present some opportunities for getting messages out to their members and the broader public but only through external media organizations. Facebook, twitter, and other Internet communications are transmitted locally via Internet and are easily monitored by the regime, yet social movement leaders may develop workarounds through communication technology to get the word out to their domestic and international constituencies.

The affordances for the average person to post and tweet their views online has dramatically increased the volume of online messages and forums to the degree that online messages of social movement actors may not be seen. Hudson (2014) reports "tweets and Internet postings were crucial in various social movements such as the Arab Spring, but attempts at catalyzing political action can be lost in the intense traffic flows that digital technologies can carry" (p. 406). In a very real "bandwagon effect" online digital consumers view popular video and postings propel the popularity of certain postings through the momentum that exponentially increases as the number of views increases. Social movements may have a platform to communicate with those beyond its membership—those who are not yet invested in the movement—but they must attract enough requisite attention just to facilitate *viewing* their postings. Furthermore, in a complex digital environment there is a very real constraint rooted in the competition for public attention, and presidents direct public attention to those social movements they deem important. With the attention-

getting support of the president, it is thus often easier to get messages out to news media organizations who then direct public attention to the social movement.

Finally, media organizations provide social movements with avenues to draw public attention, yet news media organizations are unlikely to spend substantial amounts of coverage on stories which are not sensational. Wiarda (2006) claims "the media not only reports the news, it *drives* the news, through its coverage of ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, starvation in Africa, or the Tsunami tragedy in Southeast Asia, which then forces the world to pay attention and act" (p. 4). From this perspective, a social movement may gain traction in an ever-increasing competitive environment through stories which are visually compelling, horrific, and/or emotionally engaging. Lyon (2013) maintains "since few U.S. citizens witness rights violations as they occur and—even if they do witness them—interpret them through predetermined interpretive lenses and normative discourses, they are either influenced by or dependent on media representations" (p. 105). In very real ways social movements must first solicit the cooperation of news media organizations in order to get their message out to the public, and that cooperation is predicated on the social movement news story to meet the demands of viewership by news media corporations. However, news organizations like the BBC, VOA, and RFA are not held accountable to shareholders but are held accountable by the social norms and values of the public who fund them to populate the news media world. Lyon here ignores the

considerable relevance of the BBC who have given space in decades past for many social movements.

**Rhetorical Diplomacy and Assistance of Embattled Social Movements**

The financial advantages of globalization present clear reasons why a nation would choose to abandon isolation and adopt commonly held norms and values held by the greater world community. Notice that "world community," as a constructive term, is really an imagined community perceived through the influence of media organizations, through images posted by private parties, and underpinned by powerful countries whose authority holds more sway than others. Globalization in this way is really an extension of the economic, political, and military leadership (more cynically, "domination") by powerful countries—most notably the United States, whose victory over the USSR resulted in its unchallenged authority in world affairs. Brown (2013) explains: "No viable alternative to a US-based liberal trading and security order has been on offer, nor does any other actor or even group of actors appear to offer a comparable assemblage of assets for projecting global power" (p. 6). It is thus the power and prestige of the United States that enables it to shape the norms and values of the global community. Further, by shaping the norms and values of the global community, the United States does thus compel nations who wish to enter that community to abide by certain norms and values, and upon violation of those norms and values, they lose their standing.

Rhetorical diplomacy is effective primarily because nations wish to avail themselves of financial opportunities abroad and in the United States, and the cultural products of the United States greatly define the norms and values of this global community construct. Brown (2013) reports: "While U.S. influence can prove indecisive in particular instances, no other single actor, or groups of actors, possess anything approaching the structural advantages that allow the U.S. to influence the broader economic, security and ideological contours of the system" (p. 31). It is with this power that the rhetorical diplomacy offers considerable advantage for social movements who elicit the support of the U.S. president, and as human rights increasingly becomes central to his ability to assert U.S. authority in global politics, social movements are becoming more attractive to presidents. In addition to U.S. foreign policy advantages, recent costly adventures in Iraq and Afghanistan have soured the appeal of military intervention and have made diplomatic initiatives increasingly more attractive. Thus, while social movements receive invaluable support that sustains their existence, some social movements offer the U.S. foreign policy gains in places it would otherwise find difficult to influence. Finally, in seeking to shape and profit from its influence in the global community, the United States has an interest in containing foreign actors who pose a threat to its hegemony. Henrikson (1996) argues "America's reinvigorated commitment to democracy around the globe and its indispensability as the global guarantor or orderly change toward Anglo-Saxon freedom and political pluralism to strengthen its own security and international preferment" (p. 199). For the

moment, China, more than any other nation, poses the greatest challenge to the global leadership of the United States, and the assistance of social movements in greater Asia, through rhetorical diplomacy, offers nonviolent and non-confrontational ways for the United States to contain the sphere of Chinese power. McFaul (2010) concludes, "Our autocratic friends in power must understand that we respect their Democratic challengers" (p. 163). Supporting democratic movements not only maintains U.S. global legitimacy but extends U.S. power. Thus, while social movements benefit from rhetorical diplomacy, the United States cannot achieve its foreign policy goals through military engagement. Social movements offer the United States the opportunity to press nations to follow norms and values that sustain its leadership in the global community.

## Hearing Rhetorical Diplomacy

The central discussion this dissertation is founded upon is the premise that a president may rhetorically motivate actors within the global community to adopt U.S. foreign policies. Singh (2012) argues that a more definitive definition of what a president does "is 'persuasion': employing positive and negative inducement to convince or cajole others to change their behavior, as their most rewarding or least harmful course of action" (p. 44). World leaders and peoples listen to the president because he represents a constellation of political, economic, military, and cultural power, but that power is predicated upon the respect and perceived goodwill of the president. Brzezinski (2007) argues "the

self coronation of the U.S. President as the first global leader was a moment in historical time if not a specific date on the calendar" (p. 1). While the United States is the undisputed victor of the Cold War, its position in an ever globalizing world is maintained through prudent leadership— overuse of military power is expensive, corrodes alliances, and emboldens enemies. Rhetorical diplomacy enhances unity through partnerships and cooperation through speech, but Peleg (2009) reminds "soft power ought to complement and as much as possible replace hard power, but soft power, it must be remembered, requires the respect to the rest of the world and the legitimacy of the user of such power" (p. xiv). Thus, members and leaders of global communities *listen* to presidential speeches only so long as the United States is perceived as a global actor who is beneficial to their interests.

It is too great a claim to say that any one president himself designs U.S. foreign policies. Dumbrell (2009) argues "at the macro-level, U.S. foreign policy unquestionably is more the product of shifting American geopolitical and economic interests, not to mention of the global structure of power, than of the vision of any particular president" (p. 9). However, the world community perceives elections in the United States as moments of change in the direction of U.S. policy and thus presents the United States to reshape its foreign policies with a degree of credibility. Peleg (2009) notes "although non-Americans are, of course, not part of the American political system, informally they are an important constituency that any U.S. president has to take into account" (p. 126).

A newly elected president must review and evaluate U.S. foreign policies and has the opportunity to announce to the world how the new administration will differ from the past. I argue that this is an important aspect of rhetorical diplomacy: every election presents the U.S. government opportunities to refine and improve its policies in an ever extending process of policy calibration, a newly elected president has the opportunity to learn the mistakes of his predecessor and improve the standing of the United States abroad.

The rhetorical diplomacy of a U.S. president is elevated by the attention of the world. Kolodziej and Kanet (2008) argue that "the logic of global power, dominated by the United States, compels states and people to join what is projected as an irreversible global movement favoring American leadership and ideals" (p. 5). Those who wish to join must adhere to principles of that global movement, and as leader of the global community, world peoples and leaders listen to what the president has to say—especially when he says something that concerns their country. Schimmelfennig (2001) claims "all polities have institutionalized a standard of political legitimacy that is based on the collective identity, the ideology, and the constitutive values and norms of the political community" (p. 63). In many respects, rhetorical diplomacy plays a significant part in defining which political leaders lack legitimacy in the world community, for speech acts have a direct impact on the requisite power and prestige of a foreign leader who desires to enhance his country's global economic interests.

In the final analysis, a U.S. president may choose whether to speak on behalf of democratic activists. Schimmelfinnig (2001) argues "the standard of legitimacy defines who belongs to the polity as well as the rights and duties of its members," for "it distinguishes rightful and improper ways of acquiring, transferring, and exercising political power, and it determines which political purposes and programs are desirable and permissible" (p. 63). As an elite authority from an elite nation, the president is in a unique position to rhetorically act in order to come to the assistance of democratic movements.

A president may rhetorically act to compel nations who violate the norms and values of the global community because he has the ability to reward and punish nations through the use of sanctions—those sanctions reside within the realm of what is considered rhetorical action. While sanctions are measures brought forth by Congress, they are accompanied and defended through presidential statements and speeches as they press Congress to enact sanctions. Sanctions are not only negative rhetorical actions, such as limiting trade, freezing assets, travel bans, and so forth— they also comprise *positive* sanctions. Taylor (2010) explains "where these rewards relate to trade, positive sanction might include tariff reduction, subsidies to exports or imports, and the granting of export or import licenses" (p. 6). Positive sanctions implicitly recognize that despotic regimes will be unwilling to reform merely in exchange for releasing them from punitive economic measures—there must be clear rewards for

acquiescing to U.S. demands to reform. Lyon (2013) supports the viewpoint that foreign leaders, even despotic military dictators, must be treated as *human*:

> For deliberation to begin, first people recognize other people's material conditions, beliefs, values, opinions, and purposes differ, and then both sides must have a reciprocal claim upon the other so that they are willing to discuss those differences. Without a doubt, one can say that rhetorical recognition means listening and respecting each other, and then *responding responsibly* to each other. (p. 35)

Rhetorical diplomacy is empowered by rhetorical sensitivity, and the ability of a president to compel resistant leaders to reform through rhetorical action is predicated upon the recognition that his interlocutors have genuine human needs and values. Misplaced cynicism in diplomatic efforts serves little else than to give a president a pulpit without purpose—a hollow platform where a president's expressed desire to empower a global community is met with skepticism by foreign leaders.

## Rhetorical Diplomacy Empowered by Human Rights

The end of the Cold War signified more than the beginning of U.S.-led globalization—it began a trend where U.S. presidents are increasingly obligated to guarantee the security of threatened peoples throughout that world. J. A. Edwards (2014) explains:

> The use of both human-based and national-based interests to sanction intervention creates a unique rhetorical hybrid that is indicative of the post-Cold War politics where the president must manage multiple and not monolithic threats to national security, as well as basic human security. (p. 144)

While a globalized world is founded upon partnerships, shared values, and a desire for stability, U.S. presidents may not ignore regimes who threaten global stability. As the lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan have revealed, military coercion often erodes the legitimacy of U.S. leadership in foreign affairs (Hyland, 1999). However, rhetorical action is primarily effective when it offers assistance to indigenous peoples who request that the president comes to their aid. McFaul (2010) postulates "historical experiences confirmed that U.S. engagement with opposition leaders can help protect them from harassment and imprisonment" (p.163). If McFaul's assertion is indeed reflective of the president's ability to protect democracy leaders, it may elevate the position of the president as the primary arbiter of social movements in years to come. Holliday (2011) better describes the dynamic between social movement actors and presidential rhetors:

> To insiders is allotted the initial task of exposing injustice, sketching the main perimeters of desirable intervention, and tabling it for external consideration and debate. To outsiders falls the consequential task of acknowledging imperfect duties of global justice, committing to cross-border political action, and deciding how to engage in ways that are consistent with insider views. (p. 160)

Holliday reveals a salient feature of the rhetorical diplomacy: its efficacy is dependent upon the president's ability to mobilize a regime's population in support of the embattled social movement—that mobilization may only occur if a president's actions are met with agreement by both social movement leaders, as well as the broader indigenous population.

The United States did not altruistically decide to embark on a mission to establish its defense of human rights as a central element in U.S. foreign policy in the 1990s; rather, the human rights serve U.S. interests (Wiarda, 2006). Indeed, the expansion of U.S. trade into global markets depends upon the security and stability that democracy provides. More importantly, moving to compel state actors to cease their violation of human rights forces them into a global economic system from which U.S. corporations benefit through the opening of additional consumer-driven markets and manufacturing centers. As globalization facilitates trading partnerships, the paradigm of overt domination by the United States must disappear in order for it to fully avail itself of the rewards of a market-driven global community (Paupp, 2009). As subsequent chapters will reveal, friends and enemies alike abroad have reacted with skepticism to recent overt military actions of the United States.

The appeal, therefore, of U.S. economic leadership has always been rooted in the perception that the United States will treat nations fairly. The defense of human rights serves to both bolster that perception while giving U.S. presidents the ability to shape the contours of globalization to its advantage. Lyon (2013) argues "human rights deliberations have demonstrably subjected to shameless strategy and instrumental is on, and they are often used to promote the self interests of nations, communities, and dark powers lacking respect for human dignity and difference" (p. 7). Perhaps there are threads of altruistic notions embedded in the design of U.S. policy, but Lyon's overly critical paradigm ignores the reality that most *human* political entities are inherently

self-serving. There must be a clear advantage to the economic, strategic, and political interests of a nation in order for that nation to make human rights a central element in their foreign policy, for the national resources, political capital, and risks expended in defense of those rights must offer that nation some sort of tangible return. In "the best of all possible worlds," to quote Voltaire's Dr. Pangloss, the shape of the our global community should be better than self-service to one particular nation and should be more than a contest of advantage, but little historical evidence reveals that this is the modus operandi of empires, nations, and peoples. This reality in part explains why the United States refused to support social movements until the latter years of the Cold War when the foreign policy calculus, which sought the defeat of the Soviet Union, recognized the defense of human rights as strategically advantageous to the United States.

**Rhetorical Diplomacy Engagement**

Although initially met with skepticism, the defense of human rights has become a central component to U.S. foreign policy as presidents rhetorically act to support social movements which serve the strategic interests of the United States. Note, that my realist viewpoint here does not reduce the propensity for success in assisting social movements but rather indicates the *willingness* of presidential rhetors to support social movements. As the United States has made human rights a feature of their policy (even because of self-serving interests), so too have they altered the norms and values of the world community. Crothers (2014) reveals, "The world is an increasingly interconnected place, and American cultural norms and cultural products can be expected to be at the center of those connections" (p. 176). While U.S. presidents come to the defense of human rights,

they legitimize voices (Jimmy Carter most notably) who have called for greater support of embattled social movements. Presidents are successfully able to defend human rights through his use of soft power to compel resistant leaders to institute democratic reforms. In *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics,* Nye (2005) explains the dimensions of soft power:

> Soft power is not merely the same as influence. After all, influence can also rest on the hard power of threats and payments. And soft powers more than persuasion or the ability to move people by argument, though that is an important part of it. It is also the ability to attract, and attraction often leads to acquiescence. Simply put, in behavioral terms soft power is attractive power. In terms of resources, soft-power resources are the assets that produce such attraction. (p. 6)

While there is a recognition that U.S. foreign policy is calculating in its formulation of strategic, economic, and political interests, there is increasing recognition in recent years that threats and retaliation are sufficient enough to defend human rights. Nye argues that soft power is an attractive power that pulls regimes to adopt U.S. policies, and while that power is elevated by U.S. political prestige and military strength, presidents are able to attract leaders to follow policies without coercive violence. Hancock (2007) explains, "Power can be exercised through appeals to self-interest by ensuring that incentives, punishments, and sanctions lead subjects to perform such actions as desired by those exercising the power" (p. 5). Rogue states who violate the pre-legitimate values of the U.S., and in turn the world community, destabilize the free market economy by facilitating interregional conflict and are catalysts for violence for years to come as oppressed peoples view violence as the sole method of defending their human rights. Miles (2013) reveals "both Clinton and Bush discussed their focus on rogue states within

the framework of U.S. values on the international stage" (p. 142). Even the terminology used to describe violators of human rights 'rogue,' 'thugs,' and so forth, reveals an (imagined) world community in which certain values have become salient features of that community, but although the presidential rhetors consider certain states as deviating from international norms, in order for rhetorical action to be effective, those states must consider themselves to be a part of the greater world community. Schimmelfinnig (2001) explains, "To be effective, shaming requires that actors have declared their general support of the standard of legitimacy at an earlier point in time—either out of a sincere belief in its rightfulness or for instrumental reasons" (p. 64). Thus, what is to be done with states who are not part of the world community, who do not share the values of that community, and who are thus immune to rhetorical actions such as shaming and punitive sanctions?

Presidential rhetors may invoke human rights as valid only insofar as his interlocutor recognizes his claims as reasonable—that process of creating the rhetorical space where worldviews of interlocutors' intersect, may only occur through engagement. Isolation offers no alternative to hostility, may not change the hearts and minds of rogue state actors, and limits U.S. foreign policy to coercive military strategies. Keating (2014) asserts, "Any activity that is said to constitute international society can exist only via shared norms," and "these shared norms do not come out of the ether—there must have been previous moral deliberation that structured the constitutional norms in ways that we see them now" (p. 19). However distasteful it is to engage rogue state actors, who may actively commit human rights abuses, presidents must recognize those actors as

self-interested human beings, there is no superior alternative to rhetorical diplomacy. Violence only serves to create further violence and instability in a global economy that grows through investor confidence.

**Going Global: Social Movements Shift the Balance of Power**

A social movement which appeals to the world through the basis that the regime violates human rights values of the world community are in powerful ways abandoning the values that gave rise to that dictator. Schattle (2014) explains that "globalization shapes states, and states in turn shape globalization, and this circular flow encompasses many elements, such as transnational capital, investments, ideas, brands, art and music, film, broadcasting, sporting events, and so forth" (p. 120). Increasingly popular human rights narratives have shaped cultures and how they perceive the world, and in many ways indigenous cultures are altered by universalist human rights standards. Lyon (2013) argues, "In effect, rights universalism erases the rights of difference, implicitly the right to difference, and universalism paradoxically allows it to become a tool for Westernization" (p. 152). Lyon exposes an inherent problem with the imposition of human rights perspectives, U.S. power, and expansion of global economies. In my realist point of view, no culture may inoculate itself against change, even were it to isolate itself from the world community—all cultures are in flux, they adapt to exigencies and adopt the values of dominant communities outside their borders. While social movements may represent a departure from indigenous culture as they seek the assistance from external actors, ignoring human rights for the sake of preserving

indigenous cultures is an unrealistic expectation for members of the world community. Chang (2011) argues:

> The virtues of responsibility, prudence, and decent respect for the views and interests of other states, which constitute the philosophical root of ethical realism, provide a compromise between abstract moralism and pure realpolitik, and a solution of the tension between ethics and foreign policy. (p. 166)

Yes, the diplomatic presidency and its promotion of a Western values system is inherently hegemonic when it forces sovereign states human rights to adopt human rights norms, yet with the realistic recognition that humans are predominantly self-interested, I can see no other path that globalization may viably take.

Social movement actors take advantage of pre-determined and legitimized values of the world community by requesting that members of that community boycott the products and services of transnational companies who do business with the regime. During his struggle against the military regime, long-serving Chairman of the National League for Democracy in Burma, U Tin Oo (2008) publically requested "if someone wishes to help us in struggle they can start by refusing to buy any product produced by any company that does business in Burma" (p. 307). Social movements shift the balance of power to their leadership as they effectively limit the economic sustainability of the regime. Charney (2009) notes "a boycott of the products of Western companies doing business in Burma, however, eventually gained momentum in the mid-1990's and began to show clear signs of success" (p. 184). Thus, there is clear evidence that social movements are able to inflict damage on regime actors whose financial dependency on global markets makes them susceptible to social movement appeals.

In addition to asking world community consumers to pressure transnational corporations to discontinue doing business in their countries, social movements may request that world leaders sanction the regime. Suu Kyi (1997) repeatedly called upon world leaders to sanction Burma: "We might want firmer action—depending on what happens," and "not just on the part of the United States, but from the international community as a whole" (p. 110). As subsequent chapters will reveal in detail, world leaders adopted Suu Kyi's requests widely. Although the impact of those sanctions is widely disputed, Suu Kyi was successful in shifting the international community's interaction away from the regime and ultimately reinvented herself as the prime arbiter of Burma's ability to engage in global commerce. Thus, social movement actors may successfully lay claim to the ability, at least indirectly, to sanction their own governments; likewise, the ability to lift those sanctions and reward their government for enacting reforms falls within their scope of influence. In a final turn of power acquisition, those reforms may ultimately bring social movement leaders to political power.

## CHAPTER 2

### A Brief History of the Burmese Pro-Democracy Movement

The Burmese Democracy movement offers a significant opportunity to understand how the rhetorical interactions of the president of the United States of America may successfully occur with world leaders. This dissertation limits its scholarly scope to the Clinton, Bush, and Obama Administrations, and while the Burmese pro-democracy movement began well before their administrations, it is necessary to limit the scope of this study for the sake of length and efficacy. In this chapter, I shall review the history of the Burmese Democracy movement, limiting my analysis, as much as possible, to the time frame relevant to the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations.

The case of the Burmese Democracy movement argues how the U.S. Executive Branch of Barack Obama succeeded where previous administrations could not in improving U.S.-Burmese relations, as well as successfully pressing the transition to free and fair elections. First, the rhetorical diplomacy of Barack Obama worked to form the necessary alliances with the world community, notably the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), who became more receptive to U.S. demands to exert greater pressure on the regime to reform. In the mid to late 2000s, ASEAN increasingly became concerned with growing Chinese dominance in Asia, and the Obama administration offered the United States as a powerful partner who could contain Chinese hegemony in the region. The Obama administration then took advantage of the opportune moment of pressure, the *kairos*, of Cyclone Nargis and the Saffron Revolution in ways which his predecessor did not. Using his alliances both at the opportune moment when ASEAN

was most open to pressure Burma and at the opportune moment of economic devastation following Cyclone Nargis, Obama engaged the regime and successfully pressed democratic reforms. Obama's rhetorical diplomacy presents an example, in this case, of an effective means for pressing U.S. foreign policy, rather than methods that lead to ostracizing or direct military engagement.

## A Growing Storm: Junta Mismanagement of Economy

There has been some form of protest against the Military Junta since its coup in 1962—as a consequence it is the oldest and longest lasting constant democratic movement in the world today (Charney, 2009). The Burmese Pro-Democracy Movement is a microcosm of many different local, national, and international interests and becomes a rich area where rhetorical diplomacy offers meaningful explanations. Burma's democracy movements are entangled in a complicated web involving ethnic conflict, military regimes, and international collaboration. Since 1962, the military regime of General Ne Win had governed Burma. Holliday (2011) explains:

> From 1962 to 1988, the country then known as Burma, was ruled by an autocratic regime installed by military coup and dominated by the xenophobic and quixotic general who first sketched the pattern of harsh repression that continues to this day. (p. 1)

Perhaps General Ne Win could have maintained ruthless control over his people if he could have managed the economy and maintained peace with the numerous warring ethnic groups within Burma, but by 1987 the economy was in shambles and there was little doubt the government was to blame. Charney (2009) explains, "Although the avowed purpose of establishing the socialist economy was to promote the welfare and

economic prosperity of the nation, most of the post-independence regimes sacrificed the wellbeing of the country for the economic benefit of the ruling minority" (p. 203). Chenowith and Stephen (2011) explain that in 1987 "the regime's economic policies, combined with anger over continued regime repression, prompted massive protests, starting on the university campuses, that endured until the following year" (p. 177). The economic policies of the Burmese leadership led to a series of financial crises that were the result of decades of socialist isolationist policies.

Burma has a long and proud history of democracy movements prior to the 1988 revolution, yet the involvement of the U.S. in Burma's democracy movement occurred after 1988. Thus, for the sake of concision, I will leave an exhaustive history of Burma to other scholars—the subject of this dissertation is not the history of Burma but its struggle for democracy after 1988.[1] General Ne Win's rise to power followed a democratic transition from British colonial rule after the end of the Second World War, but the period of Burma's democratic era from 1948 to 1962 was fraught with unrest and tension. In the period following the end of British colonial rule, Burma experienced significant unrest as a culture war ensued with the numerous ethnic groups residing in its border region who sought to secede from Burma. The new democratic government also

[1]There are numerous texts that reveal a fuller historical explanation of Burma's pre-1988 democracy movements, here is incomplete list of helpful texts: Charney, M. W. (2009). *A history of modern Burma.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press; Fink, C. (2009). *Living Silence in Burma: Surviving Under Military Rule*. London, UK: Zed Books; Lintner, B. (1990). Outrage: Burma's struggle for democracy. London, UK: White Lotus.; Myint-U, T. (2001). *The Making of Modern Burma*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Myint, T. (2009). Roots of Democracy in Burma. In A. Craiutu & S. Geller (Eds), *Tocqueville and Global Democratic Revolution in 21st Century*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books; Silverstein, J. (1993). *The Political Legacy of Aung San*. J. Silverstein (Ed.). Ithaca, NY: Cornell Southeast Asia Program.

had significant difficulty in replacing British colonial civil society and fulfill its mandate to provide services in education, healthcare, a working legal system, and so forth. Thus, when General Ne Win seized power in a military coup, the people were not particularly hostile to his Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP). Lintner (1990) explains, "The military takeover, some people argued, would usher in a new era of stability, and it was worth it, even if the price the people had to pay was to sacrifice the freedom they had earlier enjoyed" (p. 14). There was cause for optimism for economic success, and in the right hands, the rare mineral, precious stones, agricultural, and energy resources promised Burma's rise to power in the region. Ott (1998) claims, "Of all the newly independent nations of postcolonial Africa and Asia, none had brighter prospects than Burma" (p. 69). Rich in resources with an educated civil society, the future of Burma seemed bright.

Such a future was not to be under Ne Win—like most resource rich dictatorships, his regime was more interested in maintaining his power than improving the economy. Holliday (2011) explains the economic policies of the Ne Win regime:

> Public expenditure was small in at least 40 per cent typically went to the military, where some was channeled into parallel welfare provision. In the civilian sphere, key social services received a fraction of public spending. Education consumed about 1 per cent of GDP, teaching materials were limited, and little more than half of children completed primary school. (p. 77)

As is the case for many dictatorships, the expansion of the military was designed not for defense against outside forces but to suppress those living within the borders of Burma. Ethnic conflict with Karen, Shan, Rakhine, and Kachine has been fairly consistent during General Ne Win's regime, as the BSPP sought to exert its control over all provinces

located within its borders. This conflict not only directed resources from economic development projects, it also enlarged a swollen military apparatus which could be turned against any opposition to Ne Win's regime. Incapable of good management, Ne Win could not effectively demonstrate to his people the efficacy of BSPP economic policies, let alone articulate those policies in ways that made sense to his people. Charney (2009) explains, "Beyond slogans and bullet points, couched in calls to resist foreign intervention, no systematic ideology has emerged to make government policies meaningful, even understandable to the general population (or even to themselves)" (pp. 204-205). Thus, seeking his own prosperity and that of his family and allies, Ne Win and the dictators who followed him have mismanaged Burma's economy.

General Ne Win's management of his economy reduced what was once the world's largest exporter of rice to a country barely able to feed its own people. While the grievances against colonial rule were many, Aung San Suu Kyi persuasively argued that Ne Win was "the source of the people's hardships and the man who destroyed everything her father stood for and tried to achieve" (Silverstein, 2010, p. 307). Thus, the regime's source of legitimacy, resistance to foreign intervention, eventually held little traction among the population—all that was missing was a particularly egregious act by the regime to propel the people into open revolt.

## A Social Movement Forms

A key feature of this dissertation is a focus on legitimacy. Schimmelfennig (2001) explains the standard of legitimacy:

> The standard of legitimacy defines who belongs to the polity as well as the rights and duties of its members. It distinguishes rightful and improper ways of acquiring, transferring, and exercising political power, and it determines which political purposes and programs are desirable and permissible. (p. 63)

Ne Win's regime increasingly lost legitimacy when it failed to keep the promises which he gave in return for support for the military coup that overthrew a democratic government. Breaking those promises were enough to cause certain members of society to organize a movement against the government, yet broader support of that social movement could only come through the government's violation of norms held by the majority. Likewise the U.S. intrusion into the affairs of Burma could only be seen as legitimate if that intervention is sought by a popular group(s) within Burma whose values resonate with the broader public's. Schimmelfennig explains, "In the institutional environment of an international community, state actors can strategically use community identity, values, and norms to justify and advance their self-interest," but "strategic behavior is constrained by the constitutive ideas of the community and the actors' prior identification with them" (p. 77). Thus, a duality occurs that pushes against the legitimacy of the regime and pulls in the external assistance of the United States. This occurs because, while General Ne Win's source of power is notably drawn from his resistance to foreign governments, when his power comes into question, the assistance of foreign governments is more appealing.

A loss in legitimacy for an authoritarian government becomes a gain for representative government, and as more people begin to associate an alternative form of government with success, the greater the loss of power for the regime. Simply stated:

democracy is now broadly seen in Burma as a path to prosperity. This sentiment was revealed to me in several interviews I conducted with the leaders of movements which resisted General Ne Win. Dr. Tun Hlaing (2014, Appendix B) was part of the 1962 student uprising against the regime and later became a leader in the prodemocracy movement in 1988—he is a National League for Democracy leader and founder of a hospital and school for impoverished youth and orphans in Inle Lake, Shan State. Dr. Hlaing describes why he began his involvement in the Burmese pro-democracy movement:

> As we know these as fundamental human rights, the declaration from the U.N.: regardless of Race, Sex, Color, regardless of religion as the very important one: regardless of the political belief. We all have equal fundamental human rights for freedom of everything. At the time of the military dictatorship and socialism, Burmese Socialism, we were not even free to work for the earning. So, we realize that this political system is not good for the people. Not only for the progress, but even difficulty for normal dignity of the human. Human dignity, to maintain the human dignity and not only for the progress, but they don't recognize the human dignity. (See Appendix B)

I have included this extended quote here because it is fairly typical of many of the responses I received from Burmese pro-democratic leaders, and a key feature of those interviews is rooted in their sense that the regime lacks legitimacy. Note how Dr. Hlaing positions the description of the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights to assert his position that all Burmese people deserve *dignity*. What Dr. Hlaing describes as dignity is something far different in Burmese than it is in the West. Poverty in Burma means starvation, homelessness, living in dirty hovels, struggling to barely survive— all while a military elite lives in luxury. Poverty in Burma forces parents to send their children to nunneries and monasteries because they cannot afford another mouth to feed.

Dr. Hlaing points to a breach in the social contract between the people and the Ne Win regime, which ostensibly came to power to stabilize a country whose ethnic infighting threatened the whole of Burmese society. Burma also was influenced by the British system of government and once had a democracy—the harsh reality of poverty under Ne Win's regime caused university students to found democracy movements. It is no mistake that Dr. Hlaing and the country's university student population decided to revolt—steeped in enough knowledge to make some comparison to other forms of government and how other peoples fare, they best understood the indignity of their situation. Hlaing makes his case against the regime partly from his knowledge of human rights, and *rights* are rooted in the cultural norms of a people. Lyon (2013) explains "inherent in appreciating the force of rights discourse is ethical pronouncements, or as cultural norms, is the understanding of rights as defining relationships among people" (p. 5). A fundamental aspect of the formation of the Burmese Pro-Democracy movement was the sense that the regime had violated the norms and values of the Burmese people.

My interviews revealed broadly that the underpinnings of the democracy movement were rooted in poverty and rights, yet many of the leaders and members of the democracy movement had deeply personal reasons for beginning a democracy movement against the regime. In my interview with Kyaw Thu (2014, Appendix C), Burma's most famous actor and founder of a free funeral service and medical clinic organization, explains:

> Since 1962 Ne Win came to power my family's possessions were nationalized and threw the people in jail including my dad. I was involved with the movement because I couldn't tolerate the oppressive government. People broke

> human rights—the public's as well my family's as well as my right were rights were violated—that's why. Since then I was carrying this [burden] in my mind until now. (Appendix C)

Kyaw Thu's decision to enter into a life of activism was rooted in years long before the 1988 protests. This is the primary problem with a military regime that enriches itself at the expense of the broader public: years of unfair actions by the military engender hostility. Although Ne Win secured his power by persuading those whom he sought to rule that his regime would create stability, the enmity he created throughout the nation would plant seeds of activism in those who were unwilling to exchange basic rights for security. It is important to recognize the path of leaders like Kyaw Thu who have been personally affected by the mismanagement of the regime or have had their rights directly violated by regime. Deciding to take up resistance not only against one's government but against a military regime with the ability to violently crush a movement is no small matter.

Every leader of the Burmese pro-democracy felt *personally* slighted by the Ne Win regime leading up to their involvement in the 1988 protests. On September 5th, 1987 the regime dissolved the country's three highest currency denominations: 25, 35, and 75 kyats—no reason was given. Lintner (1990) explains: "The announcement came at a time when the final exams were approaching for the students in Rangoon" but "this is also when they have to pay their yearly fees—and, suddenly, they found that most of their money was valueless" (p. 67). The dissolved currency could not be exchanged for the new 45 and 90 kyat currency—both of which were divisible by 9, considered to be a lucky number by Ne Win. Students and average Burmese who had their savings in cash

found that much of their wealth was erased without any clear reason. Lintner and other scholars have attributed this senseless action as one of the causes for protests. In my interview with Khun Than Lwin, Chairman of the Shan State NLD in Thangyi Burma, he relates why he became involved in the movement:

> The reason I became involved in the 1988 revolution people and the main thing —at the time I was quite young but this government announced that this money is not legal anymore: 25, 35 kyat notes, 75 kyat notes—this is the reason why. At the time I was just 19 years old—that's the main thing [why] I wanted to take part in the revolution and these organizations. (Appendix A)

This was no small reason to become involved in the movement. Lintner (1990) reports that "in one sweep, 60-80% of Burma's money in circulation had become worthless" (p. 68). For Chairman Lwin, the regime's reckless and callous actions with regard to the average person's wealth, demonstrated that no solution other than action against the government was feasible.

Recall that the regime's legitimacy was built on the promise for stability. Dissolving 60% to 80% of the nation's wealth served to enrich the regime at the expense of the average person, for Ne Win and his cronies were privy to the dissolution of the currency long before they took action on September 5th, 1987. This was a calculated transfer of wealth from the poor and middle class to the military and connected elite. Thus, it is telling that Chairman Lwin's leadership in the social movement did not stem from ideological differences, but occurred because of a deeply personal injury to his ability to survive. Legitimacy here is important, because taking action against a well-armed superior military force points to the sense of desperation of students and many

Burmese people. Indeed, the exhausting deprivation caused by an eccentric ruler, compelled Chairman Lwin and others to act against a formidable foe.

Some members and leaders came to the movement because of an intellectual understanding that the Ne Win regime was flawed and oppressive, but that realization came through their understanding of other forms of government. Jimmy Ko (Kyaw Min Yu) was a key leader in the 1988 protests and served a total of 16 years in prison because of his leadership in the pro-democracy movement. Jimmy explained to me how he became involved in the movement:

> I read the books collected by my father. The books including the biographies of the great leaders of Abraham Lincoln, Kissinger, Mao, Washington, including the Kim Il Sun. . . . A lot of students and intellectuals liked John Steinbeck. I really liked *The Carpetbaggers* and *Steel Toe* by Harold Robbins and another one was *The Adventurers.* So my thoughts began to change at the time. I studied about the planning economy—I couldn't understand what is market economy. I never understood about the market economy because we are grown up under the planning economies, so within the books I began to understand about the freedom, about democracy in these countries. (Appendix D)

Jimmy's path to leadership developed through his recognition that the regime was unfair, and while many other leaders may have *sensed* this, his reading of novels and biographies introduced him to alternatives to the regime. It is not enough that a social movement be *against* the actions of a government, they must be *for* an alternative to that government. And while Burma certainly had some experience with democracy, Jimmy's reading offered him knowledge of alternatives. It is no mistake that the Burmese pro-democracy movement began on university campuses—both in 1962 and in 1988. Provided with an intellectual understanding of alternatives to the living conditions under

which their countrymen struggled, leaders like Jimmy read and learned of Western style democracies and became predisposed to the idea of opposition against the government.

Jimmy's story could have ended with his desire to live a peaceful life and continue with his studies. Jimmy remarks, "I went to the University happy and jolly like other students," and "I wanted to be drinking alcohol, so happy and dancing and going to class—this was my life, my life as a student—and sometimes I was hiding the ladies" (Appendix D). I was struck that the Burmese pro-democracy movement began as a social movement founded by young people who were in the Spring of their lives, who did not plan to attend University for the purposes of revolt against the regime.

Finally, some became part of the Burmese pro-democracy movement because of their desire to have the freedoms that they saw in other countries. Ko A Oo (2014), a leader in the student movement in 1988 who was imprisoned for 16 years, told me his reasons for organizing against the regime:

> Because the other countries, like the U.S.A., because they are free they have freedom for everything and they have freedom to speak and everything else. In Burma we don't have anything like that. That's why I became interested in Democracy and politics. Because Democracy is freedom. (Appendix E)

Ko A Oo reports what many of my interviewees told me: that they looked at the successes of the Western world, saw the failures of their own country, and correlated U.S. freedoms of speech with democracy. Although the reality of U.S. democracy may be obscured from their sphere of direct experience, the liberty to speak one's mind seems to be a palpable line that should never be crossed.

In many of my interviews, I often heard people explain that they want freedom, and because freedom means the ability to express one's opinion, be heard, and have an impact on the destiny of their country, that is why they are fighting for democracy. The common thread in most of the interviews was an economic one—Ne Win's quixotic management of the economy was a pivotal moment in their decision to rise up against armed soldiers. In my meeting with Ko A Oo (2014), I got the sense that he was deeply concerned with the well-being of his people. He has devoted his life to a free eye surgery clinic, a free funeral service, and a free medical clinic. In some ways, democracy to him really meant fairness and the equitable treatment of all people, regardless of their political position within the regime.

Schimmelfinnig's (2001) earlier exposition on legitimacy points to all of these interviews—it explains a root cause of social movement formation. At great risk to their own personal safety and liberty, leaders and members secretly formed organizations against the regime. For 25 years, the people had suffered under the rule of the regime, but they endured that rule for the promise of stability and a better economy. Thus, the many paths of personal injury from the multiplicity of mistakes made by the regime caused the leaders of the pro-democracy movement to organize. What is telling about the reasons my interviewees gave for joining their social movement, is that each one of them felt a unique and personal slight.

## The Killing: A Spark Ignites Revolt

Student protest against the regime began on March 13, 1988, following a disagreement between students and locals at a local tea shop. The students wanted to

play a cassette tape of their favorite singer but a group of drunk locals stubbornly insisted on listening to their favorite Burmese crooner. Lintner (1990) describes what happened next: "a fight broke out and the students soon beat a retreat," and "after recording the details, police went to the teashop and arrested the culprits" (p. 2). After referring the matter to police, the students went home, but the following morning they were outraged to find that the culprits had been released without charge for their assault. Lintner explains:

> As it happened, the young man who had struck Win Myint on his head was the son of the chairman of the local People's Council, one of the hand-picked administrative units which formed the local power base of Ne Win's authoritarian state. (p. 2)

Later that night, when a group of 200 to 300 students marched back to the tea shop in response, the 500 men of the dreaded *Lon Htein* riot police were there to fight them back with clubs and automatic rifles. The students threw stones, and the police fired back. Lintner reports:

> The brutality in itself was bad enough [but] the students were especially affected by the fact that Maung Phone Maw, the first casualty, had been a leading member of the *Lanzin Youth*, the BSPP's youth organization, and one of the leaders of the RIT Red Cross team. (p. 3)

The students were not willing to let the death of Maung Phone Maw pass, and on the afternoon of March 14 student groups began organizing and distributing pamphlets describing to their fellow students what happened the day before. The following day, riot police and soldiers stormed the Rangoon Institute of Technology (RIT) campus and arrested 300 to 400 students. The action by the regime did little to calm the situation and

only facilitated the organization of student revolt. On the afternoon of March 16, 1988, thousands of students marched in unison toward Rangoon University.

What happened next during the march of the students on the now-infamous White Bridge inflamed not only the students but the entire country against the regime. Jimmy Ko (2014) describes why he led students to become further involved in the protests:

> It was a repeat of our history again. Once I heard about this—now I saw about this. This challenged the history, so I decided to [become] involve in politics and fight against the BSPP. Even though I couldn't understand what is democracy, I decided to research [how] to topple the BSPP, including General Ne Win. And the very day on the 16th of March 1988—the students from the Rangoon of Technology were killed on 16th of March. (Appendix D)

Jimmy Ko reveals that the government response against the students was not seen just as a breach of social contract. The horrific violence pointed to a sense that the government would not change, was corrupt, and all that was left for him and his fellow students was to rise up and depose the regime. Holliday (2011) describes the carnage of this incident: "In a scandalous March 16 White Bridge incident by Rangoon's Inya Lake, hundreds died, thousands were arrested, and allegations of gang rape of female students surfaced" (p. 54). Unwilling to acquiesce to the brutality of the regime, the students used this incident to elicit broad-based support from the Burmese people. On March 17th, local people joined the students and formed protest camps of over 18,000 people (Lintner, 1990). Unperturbed by the volume of protestors, the *Lon Htein* arrested thousands of students—filling truck after truck with protestors and shipping them to the dreaded Insein Prison. Coincidently, it was a Friday, which sent Muslims onto the streets to

mosques prayers—they too were rounded up and sent to prison. Although all schools and universities were subsequently closed on March 18, the student protest movement against the regime had already begun in earnest. Lintner (1990) explains that the rape and torture of jailed students became a catalyst for the active formation of a social movement:

> The desire for revenge and the hatred of the government grew even more intense when batches of people were released in stages from the infamous Insein Jail north of Rangoon, [and] they brought with them tales of beatings, torture and electroshock treatment of jailed students. (p. 69)

As numbers of protestors swelled, the government responded by declaring marshal law and ordered a curfew, and calm was enforced over Rangoon.

The brutality of the regime had been exposed. The regime had miscalculated and used military force to violently quash peaceful student protests. The use of violence against nonviolent protesters only served to incite protests and legitimize organization of a broader social movement throughout the country. Years of dissatisfaction over the management of the economy, and limitations on basic freedom of speech, had already turned the public against the regime. However, the acts of violence against innocent students, as well as the rape of young women, became a rallying point for many Burmese people who had long stood on the sidelines. The regime's use of violence was the final straw that removed any remaining legitimacy the government once retained. Fear and intimidation would not work if the broader public felt that their future was hopeless: all that remained to them was revolution.

### August 8, 1988—Mass Protests

It is important to relate how news of the brutality of the regime against students spread to the wider public. Because the regime tightly controlled newspapers and other media within the country, most Burmese people received their news through the BBC and VOA (Dale, 2011). Thus, when Christopher Gunness began interviewing students who were tortured and raped at Insein Prison, the population became mobilized behind the student-led movement. Lintner (1990) explains, "the interview he recorded there later shocked and infuriated the Burmese public" (p. 91). Using the forum of the BBC, student organizers called the Burmese people to hold a nationwide strike in protest on August 8, 1988. This use of an external news entity is particularly noteworthy—especially when considering the tight control that the regime had over news sources. Although the nationwide protest may have occurred regardless of the collaboration of BBC reporters, it is doubtful that a coordinated nationwide strike could have occurred without the use of media.

Hearing on the BBC the grim details of regime suppression of the March student protests at the Rangoon Institute of Technology, hundreds of thousands of Burmese joined the pro-democratic social movement. Suu Kyi (2010), explains, "Because the students' protests articulated the frustrations of the people at large, the demonstrations quickly grew into a nationwide movement" (p. 181). They were ready to revolt; after years of economic hardship, the population had lost all trust in the regime. In my 2014 interview, Dr. Tun Hlaing explained, "The people were very much in poor condition and they are ready to revolt against the military because they were poor" (Appendix B).

People from all walks of life, not just the poor, mobilized in protest against the government. Of note here is the recognition that a social movement of this size could not have gained traction without a large segment of the Burmese population—even businessmen offered material support to the protesters. Suu Kyi (2010) describes how the business community mobilized to support the social movement:

> Some of its keenest supporters were businessmen who had developed the skills and the contacts necessary not only to survive but to prosper within the system. But their affluence offered them no genuine sense of security or fulfillment, and they could not but see that if they and their fellow citizens, regardless of economic status, were to achieve a worthwhile existence, an accountable administration was at least a necessary if not a sufficient condition. (p. 181)

Suu Kyi's description of broad-based support of the social movement is important, for it reveals that the social movement not only had the support of the poor but also had the support of some of its wealthy businessmen. This, perhaps, is not particularly surprising, but it reveals the inherent flaw in isolating the rewards of the regime only to the military elite. Having mismanaged the economy for too long, the regime based a systemic opposition that included people from all walks of life.

On the 8th of August, 1988, activists converged on Rangoon. Chenowith and Stephen (2011) reveal that "hundreds of thousands of students, monks, workers, civil servants, unemployed people, professionals, and members of various ethnic groups marched carrying signs and banners demanding democracy" (p.180). The mass protests brought the country to a standstill. While Rangoon was the center of protests, massive demonstrations occurred in nearly every town across the country. Lintner (1990) describes "masses of people took to the streets to vent twenty-six years of pent up

frustrations with the BSPP regime" (p. 96). In the first hours of protest, the government seemed unable to bridge the tide that threatened its solvency, but the reluctance to use violence by the large numbers of military forces would not last. The modus operandi of the regime stayed true to its commitment to violent suppression as, later that evening, trucks loaded with troops converged on the protests and open fired, killing a scores of protesters. Lintner describes what happened to the protesters who had converged at Sule Pagoda:

> At 11:30, truck loaded with troops roared out from the behind the City Hall. These were followed by more trucks as well as Bren-Carriers, their machine guns pointed straight in front of them. Spontaneously, the demonstrators began signing the national anthem. Two pistol shots rang out—and then the sound of machine-gunfire reverberated in the dark between the buildings surrounding Bandoola Square. People fell in droves as they were hit. The streets turned red with blood as people "scattered screaming into alleys and doorways, stumbling over open gutters, crouching by walls and then, in a new wave of panic, running again," Seth Mydans wrote in the *New York Times* of 11th August. (p. 97)

The regime cracked down harshly, killing thousands of protesters, but these actions only served to enflame the protests and create further instability. However, because of political infighting and their inability to create a united front against the regime, democratic social movement organizations lost important ground to the military, who stepped in to quell violent protests. Charney (2009) explains:

> Amid the chaos and as opposition elites fought among themselves, a group of generals organized by Ne Win and led by Generals Saw Maung, Khin Nyunt, and Than Shwe staged a coup on September 18, establishing the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). (p. 182)

The SLORC then violently put down protests and restored order by imposing martial law. Legitimizing its coup, the SLORC positioned themselves as rescuers of Burma and

argued that their leadership would bring about free and fair elections when the country was finally restored to order.

The United States was not unaware of the protests and the brutal crackdown of the regime, for there was considerable concern that a violent revolt would spill into Thailand, Vietnam, and possibly India or China. During my interview, Dr. Tun Hlaing (2014) explains what many protestors on the ground felt the U.S. military should do:

> At the time of '88 crisis we know that seventh fleet [U.S. Navy] entered the Burmese Sea Border but at the time our leaders did not agree that U.S. intervention at that time. U Nu, U Tin Oo, and [Min Ko Naing], and Aung San Suu Kyi do not agree with U.S. intervention at that time, but the protestors' progressive people leaders, second line leader do agree that and call the fleet into the Burmese Sea border. The first line leader do not agree with U.S. military intervention. And there was a military regime coup who then killed so many people. And if the U.S. armed forces backed the people they do not killed as many people. (Appendix B)

Although Dr. Hlaing shares the view of many average Burmese, the leaders of the movement felt that dialogue with the regime would produce a better outcome. However, Dr. Hlaing was adamant that foreign military intervention was the only feasible way to compel the regime to acquiesce to the demands of its people. In any case, the leadership of the NLD and other democratic parties decided against military intervention and asked the United States to allow indigenous parties to work toward a solution internally.

The regime again failed to eliminate the pro-democratic social movement and only served to reveal its resistance to heed the call of the people. Aung San Suu Kyi, daughter of the founding father of Burmese independence, rose to prominence with her response to this violence. Lintner (1990) describes "by mid-morning of the 26th, the crowd [at Shwe Dagon Pagoda] had swollen to 500,000 people of all ages, and national

and social groups in Burmese society [to hear Aung San Suu Kyi give her first speech]" (p. 115). In her first speech, Suu Kyi (2010) solidifies her position as the rightful political leader of the Democratic opposition. In this excerpt, she articulates the misgivings of the Burmese people against the regime:

> My family knows best how complicated and tricky Burmese politics can be and how much my father had to suffer on this account. He expended much mental and physical effort in the cause of Burma's politics without personal gain. That is why my father said that once Burma's independence was gained he would not want to take part in the kind of power politics that would follow. (p. 193)

Here, Suu Kyi claims her right to represent the interests of the Burmese people, and offering her father's sacrifice as a way to purify her motives, Suu Kyi secures her leadership of the pro-democracy social movement. More than just a response to the violence, the legitimacy of SLORC was called into question as a way to locate herself as the new political center of gravity.

Augn San Suu Kyi was also sensitive to the underpinnings of power in Burma and sought to elicit support for the movement by recounting her father's role in creating the modern Burmese army—the very army which had brutally suppressed demonstrators. In this excerpt, Suu Kyi (2010) seeks the support of the military:

> I feel strong attachment for the armed forces. Not only were they built up by my father, as a child I was cared for by his soldiers. At the same time I am also aware of the great love and affection which the people have for my father. I am grateful for this love and affection. I would therefore not wish to see any splits and struggles between the army which my father built up and the people who love my father so much. May I also from this platform ask the personnel of the armed forces to reciprocate this kind of understanding and sympathy? May I appeal to the armed forces to become a force in which the people can place their trust and reliance. May the armed forces become one which will uphold the honour and dignity of our country. (p. 195)

Aung San Suu Kyi here appeals to the military elite by positioning herself as the heir to her father's legacy. Here she uses an appeal by definition: the Army was created by her father, her father was loved by the people; it follows then that the Army should love her father and, by extension, should love the Burmese people. A violation of the people is therefore a violation of the underpinning raison d'être of the Army: defending the honor and dignity of the Burmese people. Thus, she asks the Army to side with the people against the special interests of the elite who do not represent her father's will.

In the aftermath of the 1988 protests, Aung San Suu Kyi rose to prominence as leader of the National League of Democracy (NLD). As the daughter of a hero of Burmese independence of British colonial rule, Aung San Suu Kyi became the face of the democratic movement (Chenowith & Stephen, 2011). Charney (2009) explains that "the most popular emerging figure was the charismatic Aung San Suu Kyi" (p. 154). Indeed, Aung San Suu Kyi would play a pivotal rule in the pro-democracy movement in the years and decades to come.

Aung San Suu Kyi's appeal to the Army was ignored by the regime. For a while, it seemed that the protesters would succeed in their quest for democracy. That hope was short-lived, and on September 18, 1988 the newly formed SLORC, headed by General Saw Maung carried out a highly organized and efficient military response. In an astonishing demonstration of brutality, soldiers opened fire without hesitation on unarmed protesters. The Army refused to heed Aung San Suu Kyi's plea and once again sought to retain their control of Burma at the expense of their people. Lintner (1990) explains, "Most army officers probably realized that the fall of the regime, and a change

of *status quo*, could be detrimental to their vested interests, threatening their privileged position in Burmese society; when it came to the critical moment" (p. 139). In some ways, the Army's success is rooted in the chaos that threatened to consume Burma in the wake of the protests. Having experienced the violence and confusion of a national strike and revolt, the SLORC's brutal suppression of the protesters did not engender further response from the Burmese public.

So it seemed that the broader public was fearful of this new instantiation of the military junta. They submitted to regime rule in return for the regime's promise that they would only hold power temporarily in order to restore peace and order, yet the brutality of the new regime followed a similar strategy of its predecessor. Holliday (2011) explains, "When SLORC took power, systematic *tatmadaw* repression ensured that leaders not killed on the streets were hunted down relentlessly" (p. 65). Thousands of pro-democratic members and leaders, including Jimmy Ko, Ko A Oo, Dr. Tun Hlaing, and others I interviewed, were rounded up and thrown into the infamous Insein Prison where they suffered torture and worse. Lintner (1990) reports:

> A much publicized, declassified cable from the U.S. Embassy in Rangoon, dated 22nd August, alleged that torture of political prisoners included cigarette burns, electric shocks to the genitals and beatings that caused severe eye and ear injuries, and sometimes death. (p. 175)

Many of those I interviewed were in prison for as many as 16 years. Jimmy Ko (2014) concludes: "In 1988 we were underground movement, underground activists—you know, underground student" and "after the BSPP crushed down the student uprising, I was executive member of the Democratic Party for a New Society DPNS. I was co-founder

of DPNS—not too long I was arrested in 1989 and I live in prison for 16 years" (Appendix D). Jimmy recounted to me how he was beaten and tortured during his 16-year sentence in Insein Prison. His story, however, would not end there as the Burmese pro-democracy movement was kept alive through those living in prison, under house arrest, and those who escaped the clutches of the military witchhunt.

**Aftermath of the 1988 Protests**

Following the 1988 protests, the SLORC followed through on their stated plans to conduct free and fair elections. Even under severe restrictions from the ruling junta, Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the NLD, campaigned throughout Burma (Charney, 2009). The SLORC conducted an intense propaganda campaign and fully expected to garner an overwhelming majority of the votes in the 1990 elections. Chenowith and Stephen (2011) reveal that the SLORC "was stunned by the election results, which saw the NLD win 80 percent of the seats, and refused to honor its pledge to turn over power to the winning party" (p. 184). Instead of acquiescing to the will of voters, the SLORC argued that the country was in imminent danger and insisted that the military should remain in power (Charney, 2009). Charney (2009) explains, "Thus, the SLORC, working through the Election Commission and citing violations of that body's rules and regulations, began nullifying the election of individual NLD MPs" (p.176). Leaders of the democratic parties were killed or imprisoned and Aung San Suu Kyi, the NLD Chairman, was arrested and placed under house arrest in July 1990 (Chenowith & Stephen, 2011).

Although they enjoyed the broad support of the people, the democratic opposition could not wrest political control from the Burmese military junta. Chenowith

and Stephen (2011) explain that this occurred because the opposition failed to "separate the regime from its main sources of social, political, economic, and military power" (p. 188). In essence, the opposition did not understand the center of gravity of military power and failed to facilitate the mass defection of military leaders and important power brokers operating within the military junta. In addition, the decades of isolation under a socialist government and its economic reliance on an illicit drug trade were partly responsible for the failures of the democratic movement (Chenowith & Stephen, 2011). Simply, it was not in the military's best interests to hand over power to a democratic opposition who would inevitably decrease military dominance in government.

The aftermath of the 1990 elections saw the military junta reward military families both with position in the government, as well as financial. Charney (2009) explains, "As socialism gave way to consumerism, the families of the military elite visibly became Burma's nouveau riche, while the rest of the population continued the long slide into abject poverty" (p. 171). This shift in the financial position of the junta made it less likely that they would submit to public pressure and institute democratic reforms. However, in 1997 the junta was pressured to make cursory reforms to prepare for their membership in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). To create the perceived respectability for ASEAN membership, the SLORC was dissolved and replaced by the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) in November 1997 (Charney, 2009). The SDPC announced that it would address corruption and further prepare to write a new constitution, yet these proposed changes were not implemented until years later (Charney, 2009).

In 1997, the Clinton administration finally took belated action against the regime after years of silence. During Burma's preparation for ASEAN membership, the Clinton administration had an opportune moment (*kairos*) to use its economic ties with ASEAN member states to pressure Burma to institute greater reforms prior to its entrance to ASEAN. Although Clinton instituted sanctions directly against the regime, little pressure was exerted against ASEAN member states to force Burma to institute democratic reform. Clinton believed that the financial benefits of entering the globally interdependent economic system, on the condition that those within that system observed human rights, would cause regimes to reform (McCormick, 2000). The ASEAN leaders similarly argued that Burma would incrementally reform as it opened its economy to international trade and engaged with its new economic partners (Rotberg, 1998). Sadly, this did not come to pass, and more than a decade would pass before a U.S. president could take advantage of similarly significant *kairos*.

In the immediate aftermath of the 1990 elections, the United States and other Western powers denounced the brutality of the junta and vocalized their support of the democratic opposition. The Western world had little to offer to the democratic opposition beyond rhetorical support; Charney and Stephen (2011) explain that "unlike the Philippines, the Burmese regime had fewer ties to or dependencies on the outside world than the Marcos regime" (p. 190). The United States was also unwilling to offer military support to the democratic opposition because of the junta's relationship with China who offered financial and military aid to Burma (Charney, 2009). The Clinton administration, along with other Western nations, did impose sanctions and restricted

imports from manufacturers operating in Burma, and while these measures did severely impact the Burmese economy, they did not result in reforms (Charney, 2009). Sanctions against Burma were complicated because of their financial ties to other world and regional powers such as India, Russia, and Japan, who refused to follow U.S. led sanctions against Burma during the 1990s into the 2000s (Charney, 2009). Puddington (2011) argues that "India's reluctance to exert pressure on Burma's ruling junta remains an impediment to political change in one of the world's most repressive environments" (p.31). Thus, the failure of world powers to direct a united front against the junta undermined the relevance of U.S.-led sanctions.

The election of Clinton also came with a shift in long-held foreign policies which often ignored Burma as a country of little strategic importance. Taylor (2010) explains that because "human rights and democracy promotion were to be given greater pride of place, Washington was particularly sensitive to the SLORC's egregious human rights violations and its unwillingness to acknowledge the results of the 1990 election" (p. 75). While the Clinton administration repeatedly admonished the SLORC, economic interdependency and the appeal of globalization were still in their infancy, and the full impact of the sanctions could not yet be achieved. As Western nations distanced themselves from the regime, southeast Asian nations, as well as China, moved in to support the regime. Thus, without the full force of a globalized economy and regional support of U.S. policy, sanctions did little to deter an entrenched military regime which viewed reform as a direct threat to their position of power. Toward the end of the his administration, Clinton became distracted by his humanitarian interventions in eastern

Europe, and Burma received little attention until George W. Bush demonstrated some interest in assisting the embattled democratic movement.

The election of George W. Bush gave rise to renewed interest in authoritarian regimes, and the plight of Burma eventually received renewed attention due to the particular interest in the plight of Burmese democratic movement leaders by First Lady Laura Bush. Charney (2009) reveals:

> Following the renewed house arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi in May 2003, President George W. Bush signed into law the Freedom and Democracy Act, which imposed new sanctions on Burma, including a ban on important exports to the U.S., a ban on visas to SPDC officials, and the freezing of Burmese assets in U.S. banks. (p. 186)

Although the Bush administration imposed increasingly harsh sanctions against the junta, it did little to produce significant political reform. This was partly due to Bush's failure to understand the political, financial, and historical context of Western intervention in Burma. Steinberg (2010) explains this failure:

> The goals of U.S. policy toward Burma—regime change and the seating of a civilian government—have not been reached in two decades. Instead, it has produced a nationalistic reaction and the fear of invasion that, however unrealistic to the outside world, is palpable in Myanmar among the *tatmadaw* [military]. (p. 117)

The Bush administration thus failed to recognize the political dimensions of Burma and only reinforced the defensive posture of the ruling junta.

While the oppressive history of colonial imperialism was decades past, the Burma regime still legitimized its rule through its opposition to the West. Bush's caustic and provoking rhetoric did little to persuade the regime to institute reforms that would have resulted in a loss of status or power. Miles (2013) reports:

> The emotionally charged history of U.S. relations with the rogue states, and the fact that leaders of these nations were making few concessions to Washington as a consequence of their own built-in anti-American sentiments (which had often been used to build and sustain their regimes), has further complicated the likelihood of rapprochement. (p. 148)

Furthermore, although he instituted harsh sanctions and threatened military intervention, Bush's lack of rhetorical sensitivity did little to substantively motivate the regime to hold free and fair elections.

The Bush administration also used caustic rhetoric to address Burma and complicated the process by which the junta could reform the electoral process in Burma. Steinberg (2010) explains "the presumptive Secretary of State referred to Burma/Myanmar as an 'outpost of tyranny'" (p. 119). Further, President Bush in May 2007 (as cited in Steinberg, 2010) stated that Burma was "a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States" (p. 119). Thus, the strong rhetoric of Bush administration did little to aid the democratic opposition, who were looked upon as an extension of Western intervention, and reinforced the regime's paranoia (Charney, 2009). Finally, Kaplan (2010) explains:

> American policy toward Burma is more moralistic than moral, and that former president George W. Bush in particular, despite the intense interest in Burma of former first lady Laura Bush, was prone to the same ineffectual preechyness of which former president Jimmy Carter has often been accused on other issues. (p. 237).

Thus, the rhetorical diplomacy of the Bush administration did little to assist the democratic opposition and created obvious hurdles to diplomatic relations with the junta. However, Bush's tenure in office was not without some benefit to the embattled social

movement, for Bush's agenda-setting ability did sustain the visibility of the Burmese democracy movement on the international stage.

The junta has been able to remain in power due to economic alliances forged through its ASEAN membership and other economic partnerships. Chenowith and Stephen (2011) explain that "the regime has joint ventures involving Thai logging interests and benefits from foreign investment and joint ventures with corporations in fishing, oil exploration, gemstones, tourism, and other industries" (p. 190). It is important to note that, in light of the financial relationships of the junta with ASEAN members, Bush administration officials repeatedly missed ASEAN summits and neglected important opportunities to bridge the divide between the junta and the United States (Kaplan, 2010). Bush's failure to form alliances with ASEAN leaders, key allies of the Burmese regime, limited the influence of rhetorical diplomacy. Thus, isolation from the West caused the junta to turn to the East for support. Charney (2009) concludes that "this was possible because of its admission to ASEAN, which has historically frowned upon foreign intervention in the region and generally refuses to take a stand on domestic issues in member states" (p. 186).

The inability to recognize the inherent contextual constraints of the relationship of the junta with the East and West severely limited the Bush administration's ability to push for democratic reforms in Burma. The caustic rhetoric of President Bush also further reinforced the junta's position, however misguided, that the West was poised to take military action against their regime. Bush's inability to respond to the financial and cultural relationships of the Burmese government with their immediate neighbors

undermined his ability to exact financial punishment from sanctions and boycotts. While they were immediately unsuccessful, Bush's sanctions did have a symbolic role and set an agenda to which Obama, the next president, would have to respond. As Bush's final term in office drew to a close, the Burmese pro-democracy movement lacked effectual support from the U.S. presidency.

**Saffron Revolution and Cyclone Nargis**

In order to understand how Obama, indeed the world, renewed their interest in Burma, it is important to review the events leading up to his 2008 election. When Barack Obama took the Oath of Office and assumed his duties as President in January 2009, a confluence of events had placed Burma again at the forefront of Western attention. In August of 2007, over 100,000 Buddhist Monks descended upon Rangoon to protest the harsh leadership of the military junta. Following the harsh crackdown of the Burmese protesters and Buddhist monks, Cyclone Nargis made landfall in May of 2008 and devastated the country. These two events may explain, in part, a renewed interest in the Burmese pro-democracy movement by President Obama and others.

These two events, more than previous events, captivated the world's attention through vivid images of human suffering. While the 1988 protests were certainly more volatile and bloody, they could not take advantage of new media, which made it impossible for the regime to control its image abroad. In some ways, the increasingly harsh sanctions forced the regime to institute economic reforms that displaced financial hardships on the shoulders of the poor. Perhaps critics of the Bush administration unfairly minimize the importance of both his sanctions and threatening posture, yet

during these two important kairotic events, the Bush administration did little to support the Burmese democracy movement. It is for this reason that I describe Obama's response to the following two events, for Obama took advantage of the opportune moment (*kairos*) of rhetorical diplomacy and successfully pressured the regime to reform in ways that Bush did not.

In late 2006, prices of necessities in Burma began rising dramatically by almost 40% (Charney, 2009). These increases did not produce revolts, even though hardship mounted throughout the country. When the International Monetary Fund advised the Junta to decrease its subsidy of fuel, the government took this measure to the extreme, and increased gasoline prices by 500% overnight. Bus lines immediately stopped running and average Burmese could not afford transportation to work. Protests by the broad population broke out on August 19, 2007 and lasted until September. The government began arresting and brutally crushing protesters on August 22, 2007 (Charney, 2009).

Prior to the monk protests in 2007, the Burmese pro-democracy movement was largely out of the public eye and seemed largely incapacitated. Dale (2011) explains, "Before 2007, to most observers outside of Burma, the Burmese pro-democracy movement seemed like a comatose patient" (p. 3). Several events occurred prior to the 2007 protests: (a) the 1988 generation pro-democratic leaders reached the end of their prison sentences and were slowly released from prison from 2005 to 2007; (b) there was a greater emphasis throughout the Western world on the importance of human rights (in fact, many U.S. military interventions were humanitarian); (c) the ability to disseminate

information both internally and abroad allowed pro-democracy movement leaders to elicit greater foreign assistance for their movement. Finally, China was increasingly interested in improving its image abroad in order to secure its position as a leading world economy. Holliday (2011) explains:

> From outside, radio was a potent means of disseminating information. International broadcasts could be picked up on shortwave, and BBC Burmese, Voice of America, Radio Free Asia (based in Washington, DC) and Democratic Voice of Burma (based in Oslo) all beamed into the country. (p. 73)

Thus, when hundreds of thousands of monks marched against the regime on the streets of Yangon, there was little the regime could do to prevent the story of their brutality from leaking to the world community.

In August of 2007, a community of Buddhist monks in northwestern Burma openly defied the government and launched protests because of the sharp rise in the price of fuel prices that placed an undue burden upon the people. The government gained headway in suppressing the protesters and also began to brutally crack down on the monks (Charney, 2009). What began as a small protest culminated in open revolt when protestor-monks were violently abused by junta authorities—that abuse raised the ire of monks throughout Burma who began their protest in earnest. Charney (2009) explains how the monks came to protest:

> In what has become known as the "Saffron Revolution," after the garb of its leaders, monks (numbering some 400,000 in Burma), outraged at what the military has done to the country, began protests in northwestern Burma in support of general protests against the government's new economic policies. (p. 197)

Figure 3 shows the protests that arose because of the regime's economic measures prior to the protest. The Buddhist community in Burma had long since been dissatisfied with the junta's treatment of the Burmese people. The monks believe that they do not protest for themselves—they are the ambassadors of Buddha, the locus of identity in Burma. This is of course tricky, as a revolt is defined as Buddhist, while Muslims are a significant and oppressed minority within Burma. The monks march in protest "with" Buddha as they carry emblems and posters and represent the embodiment of the Buddhist faith (see Figure 3). The monks, in this case, do not protest

*Figure 3.* Monk protest. From "Burmese Monks Stage Protest March," by R. Holt, *Telegraph*, October 31, 2007, retrieved from http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1567940/Burmese-monks-stage-protest-march.html

for themselves, they do so because a Buddhist dedication to fairness compels them to protest. The brutalization of monks becomes tantamount to the brutalization of Buddha himself. In Buddhism, if one were to physically injure a monk, he would be reincarnated as a lesser being (Charney, 2009). Part of the Buddhist strategy was to inhibit soldiers and governmental officials from donating food and money to the monks and thus not receive their daily blessing. The monks, in essence, were denying soldiers access to the divine.

A harsh crackdown eventually erupted against the monks by the regime and the Saffron Revolution was suppressed seemingly without retaliation from the broader Burmese public, Burma's neighbors, and the greater international community. Charney (2009) reveals that "as the United States and the European Union talked of more sanctions, the military struck on 26 September, beating, shooting, and arresting monastic and other protestors" (p.197). The brutality of the government against the monks encouraged the Western world, which had not recently taken serious steps to come to the aid of the democracy movement.

Although the junta took steps to limit media in Burma, Charney (2009) explains:

> The world watched through short video clips or viewed photographs sent out of the country by ordinary Burmese, the military was concerned that years of state media and regime apologists telling the country and the outside world that the Burmese were happy with military rule were being revealed as state propaganda. (p. 197)

The monks presented themselves as the defenders of Burma's inner soul and culture— a group who rose to act only in times of crisis to support the weak against the powerful. Visually and culturally, the regime acts of violence against monks violated cultural taboo

and served to demonize the regime in the eyes of the Burmese people, as well as the world community. Gambira (2008), leader of the monk protest movement, explains why assaulting a monk is so abhorrent to Burmese people:

> We have no doubt that by assaulting the monks, they are assaulting the Triple Gem, the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha. And to assault the Triple Gem is, according to Buddhist scriptures, the greatest crime one could make in one's life. It is likened to killing one's parents or killing one's own children. It is unthinkable. (p. 225)

Assaulting monks focused the world's attention on the plight of those who were innocent and who had devoted themselves to spirituality—there was a palpable sense of significance of the crime that the regime had perpetuated in order to maintain their power. Although the Saffron Revolution was not immediately successful in forcing the regime to reform, they elevated the visibility of regime oppression of democracy movement leaders and drew support from world leaders. Ultimately, the monks were able to set an international agenda which then compelled world leaders to address human rights violations in Burma. The U.N. envoy Ibrahim Gambari, who was sent to evaluate the situation, insisted on opening talks between the Junta and Aung San Suu Kyi (Charney, 2009).

Thus, the Saffron revolution became part of the fabric of the pro-democratic movement in Burma as it rhetorically situated protesters as victims at the hands of violent military Junta. The rhetorically appealing images of monks opposing soldiers captivated World leaders and their citizens (see Figure 3). The vivid images broadcast to the world community brightly colored monks being brutalized by the government, as well as the murder of a Japanese photojournalist. Taylor (2010) describes Asian reaction:

*Figure 4.* Saffron revolution: Monks sit in protest. From "Saffron Revolution: Monks Sit in Protest Before a Line of Riot Policemen in Rangoon," September 2007, by *ABC News,* May 2, 2011, retrieved from http://www.abc.net.au/news/2007-09-26/-revolution-monks-sit-in-protest-before-a/1159480.

> Indeed, of all the Asian countries it was really only Japan who joined with the US—perhaps due to the close strategic connection between these two allies—in targeting the Burmese junta through the use of negative economic measures, such as in 2003 when it withdrew foreign aid following the 'Black Friday' episode and again in 2007 in response to the aforementioned killing of a Japanese journalist covering the protests. (p. 97)

The Saffron Revolution also marks a pivotal point in the attention of the world on Burma. Even as the Junta successfully put down a revolt, it lost the greater war of rhetorical interaction with the world. Taylor's description is important because Japan was an important source of humanitarian aid and one of the few countries which had

financial ties with the Burmese regime. Even China, a key political and military ally, became increasingly worried about the instability that the regime had created in the region. The Saffron Revolution may not have facilitated an immediate response from ASEAN leaders yet its legitimacy was questioned as it increasingly became a source of instability in the region. Its propaganda machine discredited, and its violence criticized, Burma opened itself to pressure (*kairos*) as yet another crisis hit its shores a few months later. Ultimately, the monks offered the subsequent (Obama) administration new opportunities to form the necessary alliances with ASEAN leaders who had the leverage to force Burma to institute political reforms.

## Cyclone Nargis

Following the brutal crackdown of the Saffron Revolution, the military junta experienced renewed confidence in its rule over Burma, but their confidence was short-lived. On May 2, 2008, Cyclone Nargis made landfall in Burma and created one of the worst humanitarian disasters in its history. With winds over 50 miles per hour, Nargis sent a 20-foot high wall of water through the Burmese coastline. Charney (2009) explains that Nargis left "an estimated 150,000 people dead and missing and another 2.5 million homeless and in desperate need of care" (p. 199). Cyclone Nargis left a calamity in its wake that Burma had not experienced in recent history.

In the days immediately following the Cyclone landfall, the regime seemed paralyzed and failed to address the displacement of millions of Burmese citizens. Due to its preoccupation with security, the regime prevented thousands of relief workers from entering Burma and preventing a growing humanitarian disaster. The mismanagement

by the regime, coupled with the Saffron Revolution, had removed any legitimacy that was left for the regime. Burmese citizens were talking about violent overthrow of the government, and the Bush administration's posture looked as if it was prepared to invade in order to avert the humanitarian crisis that threatened the lives of millions of Burmese. During our interview, Kyaw Thu (2014) describes the sentiment of the people:

> There was this huge Cyclone Nargis but the government was more concerned in retaining their power. The government's misbehavior was seen in this. The government misbehavior came out and was given attention to the revolution because the government even imprisoned its own monks. In Nargis and the 2007 revolution the government was inhuman—even they could do it to their own kin. They're inhumane. They neglect all of the people. (Appendix C)

Kyaw Thu's assessment of the regime is widely shared by most people in Burma— they are cynical of any changes that the regime says that they are making. Losing their legitimacy in this way weakened the regime by demonstrating that it could not fulfill the bare minimum of governance: assisting its own people in times of crises. Instead, the regime looked as if it was only concerned with its own interests—even when hundreds of thousands of people died and were dying of disease and starvation. The regime's lack of empathy for its people effectively dehumanized the regime and delegitimized their stated argument that military rule was necessary to preserve stability in Burma.

Cyclone Nargis caused a devastation on a scale that required the assistance of foreign governments. Because of the regime's caustic relationship with Western governments who sought to send relief workers to address the dire situation in Burma, Burma's leaders delayed the humanitarian workers' entrance into Burma. Charney (2009) explains:

> An international standoff ensued leading to the gathering of Western naval vessels, including a U.S. aircraft carrier, off the coast and frantic effort by the UN Secretary General to gain permission for the introduction of international rescue and care workers. (pp. 199-200)

Cyclone Nargis revealed that regime leaders were only concerned with their own power and refused foreign aid while the international community endeavored to address a humanitarian crisis (Kaplan, 2010). Because of their lack of initiative to deal with the obvious humanitarian crisis, China placed new pressure on the junta to institute new reforms and address the needs of the Burmese people.

Cyclone Nargis also provided the Burmese democracy movement with a new sort of *kairos* as increased visibility as the world's attention was *again* focused on Burma. Keane (2010) explains, "some outside catalyst, some internal dynamic, a gradual process of erosion can lead to great change" (p. xi). Having successfully repulsed one of the most serious challenges to its rule in decades months earlier, their confidence evaporated as a humanitarian crisis required outside foreign assistance and opened the regime to new pressures from within Burma and from the world community (Charney, 2009). Having dragged its heels in allowing foreign rescue workers to enter the country and assist the people, the regime lost any gains it previously had. Holliday (2011) explains, "While the full consequence will never be known, it is certain that some of at least 138,000 deaths resulted from constraints imposed on relief efforts" (p. 75). As the world community once again became interested in the plight of the Burmese people, assistance for the embattled pro-democracy movement increased as a transition to

democracy became viewed as a cure for a host of ills perpetuated by an increasingly cruel regime.

Cyclone Nargis offered a *kairos*, an opportune moment, to use alliances to pressure Burma to reform. Incoming President Obama's rhetorical diplomacy recognized this opportune moment and renewed international pressure to force regime leaders to engage with the democratic opposition. As Obama formulated his foreign policy, Burma became an issue of particular interest to his administration. Cyclone Nargis perhaps did what the preceding years could not: offer a unique opportunity (*kairos*) to complicate the financial and cultural ties of the junta with ASEAN member nations and reveal the obvious flaws of the regime. The regime's failures became an embarrassment to the southeast Asian community of nations, and there was less willingness to enable the regime to continue its human rights abuses.

**A New Engagement With the United States**

Several developments coalesced to open regime leaders to internal and external pressure to reform. The election of Barack Obama marked a new beginning for US-Burma relations as the new administration signaled its willingness for principled engagement. It is important to note that the Burmese democracy movement had not been completely suppressed in the years since 1988—they had built a network of alliances with world leaders and used new media to get their messages out to the world. The National League for Democracy also received greater international attention as Aung San Suu Kyi was given the Nobel Peace Prize—her house arrest prevented her from personally accepting the award and further elevated her visibility as an embattled leader

of the democratic opposition. The growing visibility of Aung San Suu Kyi, the Saffron Revolution, and Cyclone Nargis all opened the regime to pressure from several spheres of influence to institute dramatic reforms. Finally, the growing dominance of China in the region no longer was a source of security for the regime, for the emigration of increasing numbers of Chinese into Burma has been an alarming development in recent years.

The capacity of rhetorical diplomacy to effectively compel a resistant regime to acquiesce to U.S. foreign policies is dependent upon the legitimacy it receives through its alignment with a popular social movement which stands in opposition to a regime. Rhetorical diplomacy also needs a central leader of a social movement to support—Aung San Suu Kyi fulfills this need by giving the democratic movement a compelling and dignified face. Brown (2013) argues, "Whatever the generals might wish, the leader of the National League for Democracy was still the most enduring symbol of freedom for the downtrodden Burmese," and "in marching [during the Saffron Revolution] to her home the monks made this clear" (p. viii). Aung San Suu Kyi thus becomes a visible leader who becomes the primary interlocutor with whom the U.S. government elevates and positions as the rightful leader of Burma. Silverstein (2010) reports "his [Aung San] name is the most revered in the nation and his memory is still alive," and "from the moment his daughter stepped into the political arena, she has been at the center of Burma's political struggle" (p. 301). There is perhaps no one else who retains the name recognition within Burma and who has been able to more broadly captivate the attention and support of a nation comprised of numerous ethnic and religious groups. Thus, a

significant source of legitimacy for U.S. intrusion into the affairs of Burma is created through the popularity of Aung San Suu Kyi. Her civility and eloquence has appealed to the world community, and she is able to communicate in ways that make sense to Western audiences.

Following the disasters of the Saffron Revolution and Cyclone Nargis, the regime had to do something to restore a semblance of legitimacy—even ASEAN leaders were troubled over Burma's brutality and lack of stability. As the Chinese began to encroach further into the Burmese economy and its territory, the Burmese leaders began to re-evaluate their political futures. Thus, in some ways the timing of the Obama administration's interest in Burma coincided with an opportune moment (*kairos*) to influence Burma's regime leaders. After years of crippling sanctions, the existential threat of disaster, and increasing pressure from fellow ASEAN member states, the leadership was primed to be receptive to Obama's new foreign policy of principled engagement. It is important to note as well that China's increasing dominance in Asia has caused the United States to pivot its concentration of power to the Asia-Pacific as a way to contain Chinese hegemony. Containment of Chinese power in Asia, in part, may explain Obama's interest in Burma. Paupp (2009) argues, "Washington's chosen strategy for accomplishing this result is to cultivate friendly Asian powers along China's periphery in order to channel Beijing's regional and international ambitions" (p. 73). Obama's repeated visits to Asia and extensive involvement in Burmese pro-democracy may be a combination of new strategic interests in Southeast Asia and the fulfillment of

U.S. foreign policies, which had repeatedly promised to assist the embattled Burmese democratic movement.

In many ways, President Thein Sein's rise to power, the Saffron Revolution, and Cyclone Nargis created a perfect storm of coalescing opportunities facilitated by ASEAN and Burmese leaders who were receptive to Obama's engagement. This is the central feature of rhetorical diplomacy: that a president may not be able to influence *all* countries to adopt reforms at *all* times, yet he must take the initiative *when* there is the opportunity, the *kairos*, to do so. As Taylor (2010) explains, "As during the Clinton years, a lack of third party support severely impeded the capacity of the Bush administration to use the full force of sanctions" (p. 112). China's rise in power and increasing domination in Asia has pushed ASEAN toward the U.S. leadership and economic partnerships. The third party assistance of ASEAN has proven to be invaluable for the U.S.'s ability to create alliances and expand its sphere of influence over Burma.

Upon his election, Obama ordered a review of U.S. Burma policy and sent Derek Mitchell to engage the regime. Throughout the next 2 years, Mitchell met with regime leaders and Aung San Suu Kyi every month—no administration had previously engaged the Burmese leadership to such a degree. When Aung San Suu Kyi was finally released from house arrest, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton immediately visited Burma to meet with her and applaud the regime for its movement toward reform. However, throughout the talks and negotiation, the Obama administration treated Aung San Suu Kyi as the true legitimate leader of Burma and only agreed to release sanctions upon her approval. This

shifted the political center of gravity of Burma as the leadership required her public approval in order to enter the global market place. Holliday (2011) explains, "After her release from house arrest in November 2010, the NLD thus issued short policy analyses and position papers cautioning against precipitate policy change, though at the same time promising a policy review and fresh discussions with sanctioning powers" (p. 118). The NLD proclamations signaled to the Burmese community who was really in control of improving the economic conditions on the ground.

As the Obama administration negotiated with the regime to institute greater reforms, they offered substantial rewards for such reforms. Sanctions were lifted in return for reforms: greater freedom of speech, greater freedom extended to political parties to organize, and so forth. However, U.S.-led Western sanctions were *only* lifted upon the expressed approval of Aung San Suu Kyi. Following significant reforms, the NLD published its change in position in the Irawaddy newspaper (Htwe, 2011):

> The NLD would welcome visitors who are keen to promote the welfare of the common people and the conservation of the environment and to acquire an insight into the cultural, political and social life of the country while enjoying a happy and fulfilling vacation in Burma. (n.p.)

The subsequent surge in tourism demonstrated that the NLD was in charge of Burma's international image and would decide whether the regime had passed sufficient reforms to merit removal of sanctions.

## 2015 Elections and Beyond

The election of Aung San Suu Kyi as a Member of Parliament in May of 2012 was hailed as a crowning achievement of both her persistence and U.S. engagement with

Burma. My visits at the NLD headquarters throughout Burma revealed tenacious political organizations who are savvy, talented, and able to market themselves, not only to the Burmese people but throughout the world community. Aung San Suu Kyi and other leaders continue to press for further political and economic reforms. In my interview with Khun Than Lwin (2014), Victor (no last name was given), his translator, told me that many NLD members have experienced continued harassment from the government because of their political affiliation:

> Do you know about the news spreading about about how this government is taking lands from the people. Those who was killed and caught, was the member of the NLD, and was the owner of a farm—would like to get the land back. The man behind the curtain is still the government. They are still using the British ways you see, of divide and conquer. The main reason is, the land they were taking [was to give it to] the merchant and business man, the farm workers are scared that the same thing will happen. If they frankly support the NLD, their business will be ruined or may come by this government. (Appendix A)

If true democratic reforms are to take hold in Burma, the government must cease its project of fear and intimidation of opposition political parties. Victor reveals that a history of violence and the fear of violence still persists in Burma, and although the regime has sought to display a veneer of political freedom, there is still much that leaves doubt that free and fair elections will occur in 2015.

In many ways the military regime continues its desperate hold onto power, partly because they know no other way how to engage in political discourse. More recently, the military regime has resisted alteration of the 2008 Constitution and has refused to provide an equal playing field for all political parties. The current Constitution presently

still maintains that 25% of the parliament should be held by military officials who were elected by a military Council. Dale (2011) asks:

> This raises a key question: Can democratic election, even with the international community's stamp of approval, produce a democratic outcome in Myanmar when the new constitution that it would legitimate is structured to retain military rule with no significant checks and balances? (p. 198)

More realistically, perhaps the reforms instituted by the 2008 Constitution are a thinly veiled attempt for the regime to retain their hold on power. Holliday (2011) complains, "Although there is, then, much of value in the 2008 Constitution, clauses entrenching military control have elicited broad criticism" (p. 83). However, the reforms the regime is instituted have opened up the door to the political process that was previously unimagined by pro-democratic leaders and members.

There is cause for hope: the midterm elections held in 2012, which elected Aung San Suu Kyi to Parliament, may point to a genuine and sincere desire for Burma's leaders to abandon their despotic reputation as brutal and autocratic rulers. Regime leaders have repeatedly claimed that they will hold free and fair elections in 2015, but many of my interviewees fear that the hand-over of power to the NLD will only come if world leaders pressure them to do so. Dr. Tun Hlaing (2014) requests American support to witness whether coming elections are free and fair:

> Whether the constitution is changed or not that's not the matter I think to myself, they won't change it. But under this constitution the election should be free and fair. Please give witness throughout the region whether it is free and fair. We are confident that if the election is free and fair we'll surely win. And when we win, please support us! The final goal of democracy! And if it's like the 1990 election, and they won't handover, please give strong support to us. (Appendix B)

Dr. Hlaing reveals the underpinning of the coming elections: that it is only through external influence and pressure that the regime will acquiesce to the demands of its own people. Without pressure from the United States, the regime has little reason to give up the power that they have held so long in exchange for loss of status and possible human rights crime tribunals. As the primary broker for free and fair elections, the president of the United States may reward the regime for enacting reforms and become the arbiter of the development of democracy in Burma; but many of my interviewees contend that those rewards should come when the regime fully demonstrates its willingness to hold free and fair elections.

Beyond the regime's willingness to hold elections, the United States can do a lot to ensure that when the elections occur, they are indeed free and fair. Because of the regime's past brutality, even against monks who are considered the most spiritual and sacred in their society, many of the democracy movement leaders and members are skeptical about whether the regime will hold onto its grip on power. In my interview with Kyaw Thu (2014), he frankly spoke about his skepticism and mistrust of the military-led government:

> It's not going to be all smooth. Thandu thukha (god's sons) monks were stripped of their monkhood and were thrown into jail—if they are that heartless to do that to people who are doing god's works, they can do anything to anyone else. They won't care. (Appendix C)

This is perhaps a root issue in transitioning from a regime which has demonstrated its ruthless brutality and violated the norms and values of the Burmese culture. They have in essence become outsiders, an aberration of Burmese culture; and as outcast members

of the Burmese society how could they ever be trusted again? McFaul (2010) validates Kyaw Thu's skepticism: "Autocrats may manipulate the electoral process by limiting who can appear on the ballot, constraining the campaign area by denying some candidates access to financial resources or national media outlets, or falsifying the actual election results" (p. 29). Through their extensive web of power, the regime could certainly try to manipulate the elections to their advantage or try to invalidate the election of the NLD altogether as they did in 1990.

## Conclusion

I close this chapter on the brief history of the Burmese pro-democracy movement with the recognition that a transition to democracy is not always smooth and without the potential for turmoil. One should recognize the inherent dualities in this history: the nonviolent protesters versus the brutal dictators; the self-sacrificing monks versus the self-serving military regime; the will of the many versus the will of the few. The story of the Burmese democracy movement is one of courage and persistence, a story of an embattled social movement which, upon seeing the illegitimacy of their rulers, embarked on a campaign to rid themselves of their dictators, even if it cost them their freedom or their lives.

In my many interviews with pro-democratic activists, I had the sense that I was speaking to persons unconcerned with their own welfare, who were single-minded in their task, and who had an obsession for fairness and equality. I met with leaders who were not part of the rich and wealthy; they were the poor and downtrodden who lifted themselves up against a superior and armed military government. While they lived in

fear, they revealed their courage in abandoning that fear for the sake of human rights, not just for themselves, but for those whom they sought to defend. These embattled few, who were too long ignored by the world community, persisted when all odds were against them. In many ways their story is the story of U.S. ancestors who struggled for equality in the face of political and economic tyranny.

I was often shocked throughout my interviews by the extensive prison sentences served by those whose only crime was to express their desire for free and fair elections. I was struck by the inhumanity of imprisoning these brilliant people, who sacrificed their lives for the good of others; and in recognizing their courage, I was humbled that I could take for granted what they would give their lives to have. My description of Burma's history of struggle and survival for democracy is altogether too brief here, for there is so much more to tell about the courage and tenacity of the members and leaders of a democratic movement who continue to press for political reform. In the subsequent chapters of this dissertation, I will continue to reveal the true complexity of this movement and to tell this particularly human of all human stories: a story of courage, self-sacrifice, and the desire to improve one's lot in life.

# CHAPTER 3

## Understanding Our Post-Cold War Status: Bill Clinton's Rhetorical Diplomacy and Burma Speeches

This chapter marks the first of three chapters that describe the central features of the rhetorical diplomacy formulated and executed by Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama. While it would be an impossible feat to completely describe the foreign policies of the three presidents in one dissertation, let alone a book, a discussion of social movements and rhetorical diplomacy necessitates that I provide enough context to begin my exploration of the Burmese democracy movement. Thus, this chapter does not attempt to fully describe Clinton's presidency, but positions key tenets of his foreign policy in order to explain his rhetorical actions related to the Burmese democracy movement. In this chapter and subsequent chapters, I position the analysis of presidential Burma policy speeches and statements. If the rhetorical presidency is about using people power to promote a policy, rhetorical diplomacy is about aligning with international groups to support a policy. It is thus necessary to offer a case where a president, through rhetorical diplomacy, forges alliances necessary to exert pressure on a resistant regime.

When William Jefferson Clinton was sworn in as America's 42nd president, the world had changed—no longer was there an "evil empire" whose nefarious designs could plunge the world into a communist dominated darkness. The sacrifices that previous administrations had asked of U.S. citizens seemed to be at an end, and in winning the Cold War, U.S. citizens turned their attention to domestic affairs. Presidential candidates

could no longer ask voters to sacrifice their blood and treasure abroad, and U.S. citizens expected a shift in the formulation of foreign-policy.

After the turn of the 20th century, presidents increasingly constructed policy independent of Congress and drew on their residual constitutional authority to set the tone of U.S. foreign policy (K. K. Campbell & Jamieson, 2008; Greenstein, 2009; Prakash & Ramsey, 2001). Greenstein (2009) explains how executive power changed when the Soviet Union fell: "The president's latitude for independent action is even greater in the unstructured post-cold war world than it was during the cold war, when the threat of mutual destruction concentrated minds and constrained actions" (p. 4). To a certain degree, the military threat of the Soviet Union precluded the use of unilateral military power by the United States, for during the Cold War, U.S. presidents cultivated friendships to maintain their strategic military interests (Greenstein, 2009). Emerging from the Cold War with a capable military, prosperous economy, a vibrant culture, and a strong political structure, the United States became the predominant power in world affairs (Hook & Spanier, 2010).

After the close of the Cold War, a debate ensued about the future of U.S. foreign policy, for while no major power threatened U.S. national security, the *raison d'être* of U.S. involvement in foreign affairs was eliminated. United States foreign policy scholars Steven Hook and John Spanier (2010) explain that, upon his election to executive office, Bill Clinton faced the critical task of defining U.S. foreign policy in a world bereft of a competing military superpower:

> Yet Clinton also recognized that the United States had enormous stakes in the rapidly changing international system, particularly in the outcome of political and economic reforms adopted around the world. Thus the president concluded that the United States must play a role in world politics that was commensurate with its stature and resources. (p. 192)

Rather than retreat into isolationism following the successful conclusion of the Cold War, Bill Clinton's foreign policy endeavored to expand the global economy, solve numerous ecological, social, and political issues neglected under the Cold War, and increase U.S. partnership with international institutions (Hook & Spanier, 2010). Young (2008) contends that, without the fear of Communist expansion, European powers became resistant to U.S. leadership and "concentrated on bringing the newly independent nations of Eastern Europe into the economic fold, thus filling the void in leadership left by the United States" (p. 172). Bill Clinton's reformulation of U.S. foreign policy becomes important to the examination of Post-Cold War rhetorical diplomacy, for under Clinton's executive leadership, the United States gradually shifted its attention away from the struggle with a Soviet military superpower and gravitated toward greater involvement in developing the underpinnings of the global economy. Thus, the U.S. presidency was reconstituted to rhetorically engage the global community through economic assistance, humanitarian aid, and leadership in socio-political areas rather than engage the world militarily.

Clinton's Burma foreign policy was rooted in his attempt to remove the trade barriers created in the Cold War. His desire to elevate the domestic economy through globalization eclipsed sustained attention in any one particular area of the world—to many it seemed that Clinton was not decisive in any particular region. Hyland (1999)

explains, "To Asians, Clinton seemed preoccupied with NATO and Russia; to Europeans, however, Clinton seemed obsessed with correcting trade imbalances and opening Asian markets" (p. 198). In the early years of the Clinton administration, he did not attend to the embattled pro-democracy movement in Burma, but as his human rights policy evolved, Clinton focused more on humanitarian issues as a central element of his foreign policy.

Although Bill Clinton had criticized George H. W. Bush for failing to pressure China to reform, in 1994 he decided to separate China's human rights record from renewal as Most Favored Nation (McCormick, 2000). However, this is not to say that Clinton was not dedicated to human rights, for while the prospect of a political standoff with China was unpalatable, Clinton pursued the defense of human rights in areas that were less politically dangerous. During the Clinton administration, ASEAN rose to prominence as a trade association which represented significant interest to Clinton's goal of securing U.S. global economic interests.[2] Burma's application to enter ASEAN in 1997 may have been an attempt by regime leaders to prevent Western intrusion into its national affairs and to reduce the impact of Western-led sanctions. However, Clinton's kairotic moment, his political opportunity, occurred as Burma sought to join ASEAN. United States economic ties to ASEAN member states presented an opportunity for Clinton to create an ASEAN alliance that could pressure Burma to reform, but the

[2]ASEAN member states are: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Clinton administration became more engrossed in humanitarian interventions in Eastern Europe and missed this opportunity.

While many scholars debate whether disposing of George H. W. Bush was a prudent decision by voters, Bill Clinton constituted a shift in the perception of U.S. influence in the world. Bill Clinton, as prime advocate of domestic interests, dramatically reformed foreign-policy to benefit U.S. corporations who wished to expand into the newly formed globalized world. While Clinton recognized that a commitment to domestic economic success was critical to his political power, he recognized that those economic successes could only come through open trade, security partnerships, and the establishment and enhancement of international political institutions.

Clinton's rhetoric of change and greater partnership with foreign entities was not a reflection of a lofty goal of world peace, but rather a recognition that sharing the burden of leadership in the world meant sharing the considerable cost that had drained resources into Pentagon-directed programs and away from those programs that could help American business, education, and the middle class. J. A. Edwards (2008) explains, "Clinton's language suggests he emphasized greater bonding with all nations within Asia and Latin America, not just the great powers" (pp. 167-168). This pivot to new markets and expanding the scope of U.S. relationships, beyond those dictated by Cold-War containment strategies, constituted a dramatic shift in how the United States considered the relevance of countries who may not serve U.S. strategic interests but who could serve Clinton's greater goal of open markets.

Clinton's election represented a shift in U.S. citizens' willingness for sacrifice, for domestic politics centered more on how the United States could economically benefit from the opportunities that came with the end of the Cold-War. Peleg (2009) asserts, "The sudden, unexpected end of the Cold War left the United States with a great, historically unique opportunity to reshape the world in a way that reflected its values and interests" (p. 20). The post Cold-War world rightfully would be shaped by the United States because of successive generations who had sacrificed for those beyond their borders, and the victory of the Cold-War served to reinforce an ideology that saw U.S. values as inherently superior. Wiarda (2006) explains "because we are successful and our institutions are superior, we have no need to learn how other countries do things" (p. 8). United States exceptionalism, now legitimized through hard-fought victory over the "evil empire," could be touted openly as Clinton pressed foreign policies that opened new markets for U.S. investors.

Finally, although Clinton's campaign victories over incumbent George H. W. Bush ushered changes in some U.S. foreign policies, Clinton and Bush seemed to similarly promote and extend American military power (Peleg, 2009). This could be due to Clinton's lack of foreign policy experience, coming into office, and offering campaign promises which would focus more on domestic issues. Ultimately, delegating responsibility for foreign affairs to his cabinet explains U.S. continuity in the foreign policy. McCormick (2000) explains that "unlike his two immediate predecessors, Bill Clinton came to office with neither a strong ideological view on foreign affairs nor much foreign-policy experience" (p. 62). This perhaps explains why Clinton was more able to

reformulate his policy stances in years to come as he 'learned on the job' the new complexities that came with an ever-globalizing world whose certainty could not be ensured by Cold-War calculus. Arnold (2000) maintains "nothing about Clinton's own background prepared him for his foreign-policy role" (p. 32). Thus, Clinton's presidency should thus be looked upon as an administration that faced considerable challenges in how it addressed new exigencies. Hoff (2008) summarizes the new world of foreign policy constraints that Clinton faced:

> The end of the Cold War gave the United States the opportunity not only to take stock of its domestic political and economic problems, but also to shoulder responsibility and rethink the coercive aspects of its successes abroad as well as some of the less-than-savory and unsuccessful endeavors in the last fifty years of American foreign-policy—not the least of which is the fact that "war seldom creates democracy." (p. 5)

Clinton's inexperience in foreign policy both allowed him to reformulate how the United States would interact with nations abroad, and while Clinton's domestic presidency would be overshadowed by the Monica Lewinsky scandal, his leadership in the creation of numerous international trade and political organizations would have a lasting impact on the shape of globalization for years to come.

**Defeating George H. W. Bush—Clinton Pushes a Domestic Agenda**

The end of the Cold War marked an end to a détente between the USSR and the United States and the 50-plus year contest for power, yet the end of the Cold War did not mark the beginning of a safer and more stable world. On the contrary, the end of the Cold War constituted a draw down of resources that multiple agencies used in order to contain the Soviet Union in a great power competition of strategic interests (Ott, 1998).

The end of the Cold War also marked the end of American voters' willingness to expend resources that could be better used to improve the domestic economy. Wiarda (2006) claims, "President H.W. Bush was heavily criticized in the early 1990's for focusing too much on foreign policy at the expense of domestic concerns" (p. 51). This is not to say that U.S. citizens had definitively decided how U.S. foreign policy should be executed; rather, the USSR shifted U.S. attention to domestic issues. Nye (2004) explains that, in the 1990s, "Americans were largely indifferent and uncertain about how to shape a foreign policy to guide this power" (p. 25). Thus, Bill Clinton provided an answer to the growing resistance to continuing expenditures in foreign affairs.

Clinton's political calculus was heavily weighted by public opinion of his policy, for campaigning on domestic issues instead of a foreign policy platform naturally shifted his rhetorical presidency to the home front. Assessing the first years of the Clinton administration, G. C. Edwards (1995) argues, "The Clinton administration is the ultimate example of the public presidency, one based on a perpetual campaign to obtain the support of the American people and fed by public opinion polls, focus groups, and public relations memos" (p. 234). In the early years of his presidency, Clinton's obsession with polls perhaps explains why he was unwilling to devote resources for exigencies occurring outside of U.S. borders at the expense of his domestic agenda. Bennett (2014) explains, "Initially he was less concerned about international issues, as he addressed the big home-front economic, social, and political questions that had preoccupied him while running for office" (p. 170). This is not because Clinton was unaware of the instability brewing throughout the world beyond U.S. borders; rather, Clinton's policy was a

reflection of his constituencies' willingness to devote resources to foreign matters. Berman and Goldman (1995) claim, "Lacking experience and interest in foreign policy, the presidential candidate believed that if a battle was to be fought, resources of intervention deployed, it would be in a war against domestic problems, not foreign enemies" (p. 291). Further, Clinton recognized that his domestic agenda constituted his political center of gravity and he refused to mistakenly devote his limited political capital to foreign policy as his predecessor did.

Bill Clinton's campaign victories over George H. W. Bush marked an end to articulating the moral center of U.S. culture in contrast to immorality of communism. MacLean (2006) argues, "Clinton avoided giving too much attention to his foreign policy agenda not because it did not matter, but because it did not reflect the domestic opinion of what his administration should be doing" (p. 5). Clinton's campaign responded to domestic concerns and formulated policy which centered more on helping the middle class and facilitating a tech boom.

As overseer of the end of the Cold War, it is likely that George H. W. Bush was obligated to continue policies which sought to ameliorate the potential instability that could follow the fragmentation of the former Soviet Union. MacLean (2006) argues, "Bush had no choice; he held the reigns of power when the Cold War ended, and could not feign confusion, or waver on the next step for America" (p. 2). However, Bush and previous administrations had long been criticized for supporting tyrants in exchange for strategic returns. During his campaign, candidate Clinton repeatedly criticized Bush for violating the norms and values of the American people and for not supporting democracy

and human rights. Henriksen (1996) argues, "On the subject of democracy, Clinton held that Bush 'sided with the status quo rather than democratic change—with familiar tyrants rather than those who would overthrow them'" (p. 5). While candidate Clinton promised to concentrate more on improving the circumstances of Americans at home, his critique of questionable U.S. foreign policies resonated with those who were no longer unwilling to ignore violations of American values.

Clinton's campaign also promised that the newly elected president's foreign policy agenda would be constructed in response to popular opinion. Chang (2011) reports, "George H. W. Bush's defeat in the 1992 presidential election appeared to send the message that the United States, as the world's only superpower, would put its own house in order first" (p. 53). Clinton's victory signaled a clear shift in public willingness to devote resources that could be used to sustain domestic programs. In the early years of the Clinton administration. there was increasing pressure to disband long respected programs that had been instrumental in extending and preserving U.S. political and military power abroad. M. Cox (1995) explains, "The State department proposed the elimination (or at least the merger with itself) of three key agencies: AID, itself, the United States Information Agency (USIA), and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA)" (p. 17). Left without an existential enemy or a clear rationale for continuing the massive expenditures that were popular under the Reagan and Bush administrations, Clinton faced growing domestic pressure to reduce its financial and military obligations abroad. Clinton's reluctance to attend to foreign policy exigencies in the initial years of his administration led to subsequent accusations of failing to come to

the aid of embattled social movements whose regimes increasingly took advantage of the vacuum left by the Soviet Union.

## Clinton's Rhetorical Diplomacy of Nonviolent Engagement and Multilateralism

Defeating Bush by centering his political platform on the domestic economy was a referendum of sorts on Cold War foreign policies. While the Clinton administration was often accused of vacillation and indecisiveness in foreign policy matters, his leadership was a reflection of the sea-change occurring in the United States during the 1990s. M. Cox (1995) again reports, "Underwriting U.S. power was an extremely expensive business, but so long as it was assumed that this was required to contain Soviet ambitions, then most Americans were prepared to shoulder the burden" (p. 11). Thus, some of the criticism for Clinton's adherence to voter demand seems misplaced at times, for while Bush perhaps recognized the potential for violence in the post-Cold War eastern-Europe, his political platform ignored the very real changes in domestic public opinion.

Clinton's first years in office provided little encouragement to enter into politically hazardous foreign engagements as voices from public, the republican opposition, and his own party expressed resistance to continued U.S. leadership in international affairs. J. A. Edwards (2008) explains that while conservative political pundit Pat Buchanan "argued the United States should end foreign aid, withdraw troops from Europe and South Korea, and halt payments to the International Monetary Fund and World Bank," many on the left "claimed the Bush administration was more concerned

with the economic development of Bangladesh, Turkey, and the Soviet Union than it was with the U.S. economic recovery" (p. 28). This sea-change following the Cold War had much to do with the promises of previous administrations, that once the defeat of the Soviet Union was accomplished, U.S. citizens would no longer be asked sacrifice their well-being for the sake of others. However, Clinton's own lack of foreign policy experience also caused him to rhetorically elevate domestic issues in effort to sidestep criticism that he was unqualified to hold the highest office in U.S. government (Dumbrell, 2009). For a variety of reasons, the U.S. public asked of their leaders to improve an economy whose perceived failings were blamed on the massive expenditures dedicated to Cold War policies.

While Clinton's draw down of troops may be viewed as a response to domestic pressures, his movement toward diplomatic solutions that were previously militarily solved directly or through proxy wars could be seen as a renewal of Wilsonian foreign policy methodology (Taylor, 2010). Clinton repeatedly expressed his belief that globalization and economic interdependency held the promise of cooperation that military intervention could not achieve. Brzezinski (2007) argues, "After the anxieties of the Cold War and the uncertainties of its initial aftermath, globalization was reassuringly sunny, optimistically asserting the benign effect of dynamic interdependence" (p. 32). Clinton saw globalization as a panacea that could solve a variety of problems created by previous instantiations of foreign policy: massive expenditures, losing moral high ground in return for strategic advantages, and tenuous alliances built on unsustainable financial rewards in return for loyalty. During Clinton's administration, military spending was

dramatically reduced by 20% and was touted as improving the economy (McFaul, 2010). Criticizing Clinton, Hyland (1999) argues, "Too often had Clinton tailored his foreign policy to popular opinion, which he mistakenly believed was the foundation of a legitimate foreign policy" (p. 201). Hyland critiques Clinton for not having a guiding foreign policy—too often Clinton pondered and vacillated when clear leadership was needed. Soderburg (2006) defends Clinton: "Over the first two years of his presidency, Clinton redefined a new use of force and diplomacy aimed at international support" (p. 95). However, as numerous humanitarian crises obligated Clinton to test his foreign policy calculus, there were limits to what diplomacy could achieve.

Perhaps somewhat justifiably, critics of Clinton foreign policy saw his recalcitrance to use force as the skilled tactics of a seasoned politician. Miles (2013) claims:

> Rather than devising strategies to moderate rogue state behavior and get them to "open up" to the outside world, the administration was more concerned with utilizing the rogue threat to forestall any public shift toward isolationism and generate support for the continuation of U.S. leadership and hegemony on the global stage. (p. 143)

Miles claims that Clinton's reluctance to exert nonmilitary pressure significantly demonstrated an overreliance on what the global economic system could achieve in the absence of military engagement. However, Clinton's leadership points more to his sense of how far he could draw the domestic attention to issues outside of U.S. borders. Bennett (2014) concludes simply: "Bill Clinton did not come to power at a favorable time for activist political leadership" (p. 229). Exhausted through years of military conflict, fears of nuclear holocaust, and draining military expenditures, the American

public refused to acknowledge the importance of crises that did not constitute an existential threat.

Clinton's critics too often neglected the challenges of re-formulating foreign policies that were decades in the making and whose strategies were ill equipped to address the volatility of a post-Cold War vacuum of power. M. Cox (1995) retorts: "Sweeping generalization about foreign policy failures and setback are no substitute for concrete analysis of the way or ways in which the United States has tried to come to terms with post-Cold War realities" (pp. 3-4). Clinton's critics underestimated, as George H. W. Bush did, the difficulty in articulating a vision compelling enough to elicit national appeal for foreign policy issues. Chang (2011) explains, "The collapse of the old bipolar international system presented Americans with a number of problems, the most difficult one of which was how to redefine the nation's role in global affairs in the new era" (p. 53). Clinton's political sensitivity to the needs and values of American voters revealed to him the significant political advantages of focusing on domestic economic issues, and although Clinton may have only delayed inevitable foreign interventions, his support for international cooperation enhanced the appeal of globalization.

Although the Clinton administration was responsive to an American public who refused significant military and economic involvement abroad, there is some evidence that Clinton wanted to come to the aid of those experiencing significant humanitarian crises. Wittkopf and McCormick (2004) claim, "In the latter years of the Clinton administration, for example, the president felt constrained in dealing with various

humanitarian crises abroad by an American public reluctant to support sending U.S. ground forces to cope with them" (p. 5). While America's power was unmatched, the vacuum left by the Soviet Union had unforeseen consequences. Brands (2014) explains, "The collapse of the Soviet Union had left the United States with unchallenged global preeminence, and it removed the dominant security threat that had focused the country's attention for decades" (p. 146). In some ways, demonizing a group of communist countries was a simple but effective way to position U.S. values and democratic ideology in contest with those of a Communist regime. Those (morally) unsettling alliances created with despotic regimes, Islamic fundamentalists, and others were re-evaluated during the Clinton administration as human rights became an increasingly central element in U.S. foreign policy.

**Analysis: Message to the Congress on Prohibiting New Investment in Burma, May 20, 1997**

In his *Message to Congress,* Clinton (1997a) locates the defense of human rights as the primary factor for sanctioning Burma. Here, Clinton outlines prohibitions of U.S. investment:

1. entering a contract that includes the economic development of resources located in Burma;
2. entering a contract providing for the general supervision and guarantee of another person's performance of a contract that includes the economic development of resources located in Burma;
3. purchasing a share of ownership, including an equity interest, in the economic development of resources located in Burma;
4. entering into a contract providing for the participation in royalties, earnings, or profits in the economic development of resources located in Burma, without regard to the form of the participation;
5. facilitating transactions of foreign persons that would violate any of the foregoing prohibitions if engaged in by a United States person; and

6. evading or avoiding, or attempting to violate, any of the prohibitions in the order. (n.p.)

It is important to notice here that the prohibitions of U.S. investment only preclude future business conducted in Burma and did not force U.S. corporations to dissolve their ongoing interests. Clinton sought similar prohibitions on investment from other Asian leaders, yet ASEAN refused to bend to U.S. requests to similarly sanction and pressure Burma to reform. Although ASEAN countries refused to emulate U.S.- Burma sanctions, these rather general prohibitions also served to elevate the visibility of the U.S. stance and further brought the human rights abuses of the regime to the public eye.

Presidential messages which articulate sanctions against rogue states are also opportunities for presidents to locate the transgressions of the rogue states and rhetorically offer proposed remedies to be brought back into the good graces of the United States. The following demonstrates Clinton's (1997a) commitment to human rights, globalization, and multilateral cooperation:

> My Administration will continue to consult and express our concerns about developments in Burma with the Burmese authorities as well as leaders of ASEAN, Japan, the European Union, and other countries having major political, security, trading, and investment interests in Burma and seek multilateral consensus to bring about democratic reform and improve human rights in that country. (n.p.)

Here Clinton calls on the global community to join him in limiting their investment in Burma, for while the United States is a significant economic power—the full force of sanctions can only be brought to bear when a majority of countries join in sanctioning the rogue state. What is also telling about this statement is Clinton's selection of countries

which he hopes will join him in sanctioning Burma—China is obviously missing from the group of nations who could potentially impact Burma's economy. However, Clinton's emphasis on ASEAN and Japan is noteworthy, as they represent a significant percentage of Burma's foreign investment and may have constituted key countries who could better pressure Burma.

After calling on multilateral cooperation for his sanctions, Clinton (1997a) outlines the abuses of the SLORC, not only to justify his sanctions but to reveal the particular abuses that need to be ameliorated in order for those sanctions to be lifted:

> I have taken these steps in response to a deepening pattern of severe repression by the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) in Burma. During the past seven months, the SLORC has arrested and detained large numbers of students and opposition supporters, sentenced dozens to long-term imprisonment, and prevented the expression of political views by the democratic opposition, including Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy (NLD). (n.p.)

What is interesting is Clinton's concentration on most recent abuses committed by the regime, yet the junta had brutally oppressed pro-democratic organizations within Burma for decades. Instead of addressing the past abuses of the SLORC, Clinton locates specific events in the last 7 months as the primary impetus for sanctions against Burma.

Clinton's rhetorical diplomacy locates the key social movement actor, Aung San Suu Kyi, in order to forge a rhetorical alliance with the National League for Democracy which may serve to elevate its prestige. Clinton's list of abuses offers to his universal audience that his grievances are reasonable. Perelman and Olbrechts- Tyteca (2008) explain how argumentation of this sort works before a universal audience: "Argumentation addressed to a universal audience must convince the reader that the

reasons adduced are of a compelling character that they are self-evident, and posses an absolute and timeless validity, independent of local or historical contingencies" (p. 32). Clinton chooses particular grievances which are compelling enough to persuade his audience that his request for allies in sanctions against Burma possess an absolute validity. His list of human rights violations, offered by Clinton in this way, serve to constitute and locate the values of his universal audience who may agree that the actions of the Burmese government do violate human rights.

Clinton then moves to locate how the United States is directly threatened by the regime, for the legality of enacting this sanction must be substantiated through a demonstration of how the security of the United States is impacted by the rogue state. Here, Bill Clinton (1997a) advances human rights as central to U.S. security:

> [move 1] I believe that the actions and policies of the SLORC regime constitute an extraordinary and unusual threat to the security and stability of the region, and therefore to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.
> [move 2] It is in the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States to seek an end to abuses of human rights in Burma and to support efforts to achieve democratic reform. Progress on these issues would promote regional peace and stability and would be in the political, security, and economic interests of the United states.
> [move 3] The steps I take today demonstrate my Administration's resolve to support the people of Burma, who made clear their commitment to human rights and democracy in 1990 elections, the results of which the regime chose to disregard. (n.p.)

Recall my earlier description of Clinton's dramatic departure of cold war foreign-policy strategy. Clinton's post-Cold War rhetorical diplomacy is rooted not in military threats that directly impact the United States but in threats that limit the expansion of U.S. global economic interests. Clinton creates rhetorical connections between the human

rights abuses and the security of the United States. Using an enythmenatic demonstration, Clinton's rhetorical strategy argues: if the United States needs democracy and observance of human rights to create stability; and the United States relies on stability in the region for its interests; therefore because the SLORC violates human rights and democracy, the SLORC constitutes a threat to U.S. interests.

I have taken a moment here to extensively analyze this passage of Bill Clinton's message because it marks a departure from long-held Cold War foreign policies whose logic was built on strategic containment of communist countries. Clinton's demonstration of how human rights directly impacts the national security of the United States is remarkable, for the defense of human rights, under Clinton's rhetorical diplomacy, is elevated to the level of security threat. Under Clinton's logic, the new era of globalization requires stability in order to protect U.S. economic, political, and security interests. Thus, it is stability, achieved through democracy and human rights, which becomes a central factor in formulating foreign policy. More realistically, the obvious omission of a moral imperative perhaps leads one to conclude that the foreign-policy calculus of the Clinton administration is more about securing U.S. economic and political hegemony. I would counter that no nation would be willing to expend significant financial and political resources without some sort of motivating reward.

This final passage reveals Clinton's (1997a) admonition of the regime and paves a way out of U.S. sanction if they reform:

> I emphasize that Burma's international isolation is not an inevitability, and that the authorities in Rangoon retain the ability to secure improvements in relations with the United States as well as with the international community. In this respect, I once again call on the SLORC to lift restrictions on Aung San Suu Kyi and the political opposition, to respect the rights of free expression, assembly, and association, and to undertake a dialogue that includes leaders of the NLD and the ethnic minorities and that deals with the political future of Burma. (n.p.)

Clinton tells the regime that poor relations with the United States need not persist, and while the United States has the authority to enact sanctions, it places the burden of lifting the sanctions on regime leaders. More remarkably, Clinton rhetorically positions the NLD and Aung San Suu Kyi as the political center of gravity in Burma— her empowerment is the only way the regime may get into the good graces of the United States government. Clinton thus makes democratic reform and dialogue with democracy movement actors as a condition of improved relations with the United States.

Clinton's (1997a) *Message to Congress* reveals that rhetorical diplomacy rooted in human rights in a post-Cold War era is a defensible strategic position whereby a president may invoke his executive authority. Clinton's *Message to Congress* aligns the United States with Aung San Suu Kyi and rhetorically create alliances with the Burmese pro-democracy social movement within Burma. Forging these alliances is necessary in order to exert pressure on the regime from within Burma and elevate a central person whom other nations may then support. Clinton's repeated reference to Aung San Suu Kyi both solidifies U.S. alliances with a social movement while offering to the international community a social movement leader whom the United States has legitimized. Clinton's rhetorical diplomacy endeavors not to force the regime to reform; rather, he asks that the regime enter into dialogue with leaders of the NLD— reform may

then come from that dialogue. Thus, Clinton's rhetorical diplomacy works to facilitate a dialogue where Burmese political leaders themselves may then forge a new political future.

## Empowering Rhetorical Diplomacy: Clinton's Foreign Policy of Economic Globalization

Clinton was not alone in his assertion that a post-Cold War world held great promise for American economic interests. Many corporations saw the opening of untapped markets in Asia, South America, and Eastern Bloc nations as opportunities for significant potential financial gains. Taylor (2010) explains:

> Fresh from their perceived victory in the decades-long superpower struggle and freed from the significant financial burdens which had attended it, a strong sentiment existed amongst many U.S. policymakers that the time was now ripe to reap the benefits of the ensuing peace dividend. (p. 35)

As the world's sole superpower, Americans felt that given the sacrifices they gave to contain Soviet power, globalization should be shaped by U.S. leadership in ways that advantaged American business. MacLean (2006) maintains, "The Russian bear, it seemed, had been declawed and it was time for the United States to assert its global primacy while attending to the domestic economy" (p. 5). Clinton's reliance on globalization as a system that would limit violence and ensure peace was founded on the belief that economic relationships would naturally limit the self-inflicted wounds of violence. J. A. Edwards (2008) argues that Clinton "recast America's foreign policy vocabulary to manage and harness the changes brought upon this new era on interdependence" (p. xiii). Further, by positioning globalization as economically

beneficial to the U.S.'s domestic economy, Clinton argued that isolationism posed a limitation on American financial success.

Clinton's reformulation of foreign policy to center on economic globalization was perhaps a response to the confusion left in the wake of the dissolution of the USSR. Schier (2000) summarizes Clinton's problem: "The end of the Cold War also produced great uncertainty over the course of American foreign-policy," for "without a great rival, how do we define American interests? How do we pursue them? These questions plagued Clinton and the rest of Washington during his presidency" (p. 5). There was a sense that the United States needed to formulate a foreign policy that legitimately pressed U.S. interests abroad now that the Soviet Union had dissolved. Furthermore, the fall of the Soviet Union also meant that Clinton, the UN, and NGOs (MSF, Red Cross, Amnesty International, etc.) could concentrate on the promotion of Democracy and human rights in places like Burma. Ford (2013) explains:

> These transnational mechanisms became increasingly effective after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union, as Northern states began to pursue human rights abuses more seriously once they no longer felt the need to provide unconditional support to the region's authoritarian and semi-democratic regimes. (p. 10)

In essence, the Clinton administration's reformulation of traditional policy considerations (international security and containment of communism), which often defied lauded U.S. democratic values, signaled a new path in foreign policy where the United States would support governments, social movements, and peoples who espoused democracy and the defense of human rights. Further, Clinton viewed the benefits of

global commerce as the vehicle which would attract, through a lucrative system of trade, world leaders to adopt democratic and human rights values.

Clinton's commitment to globalization did not fully realize the potential for the rhetorical diplomacy—perhaps this is due to the fact that globalization is a slow process, and the interdependency that Clinton sought would be years in the making. Clinton (as cited in Rubinstein, Shayevich, & Zlotnikov, 2000) argues, "We must use military force selectively recognizing that its use may do no more than provide a window of opportunity for society—and diplomacy—to work" (p. 6). Beyond recognizing the limitations to military force, globalization and rhetorical diplomacy could potentially reap the U.S. economy significant rewards. Brzezinski (2007) argues, "America's embrace of globalization implied innovation, historical momentum, and a constructive outreach, and it identified the American nation interest with the global interest," thus "Globalization was thus a convenient doctrine (and a fine source of slogans) for the victor in the just-ended Cold War" (p. 31). Brzezinski's more realistic view here falls more into line with this dissertation's findings: that political leaders are often self-serving as they seek to stay in power, secure benefits for their respective nations, or as they seek to personally gain from their position of power. It is a rare leader who, attracted to possess power in the first place, would altruistically deny the benefits that position of privilege offers, and while Brzezinski's point here encapsulates U.S. society, his assessment is more realistic about how nations operate globally.

One should recognize that the appraisal of post-Cold War America as "self-interested" stems from a recognition that the suffering of human beings must

necessarily be humanized through direct contact or visual representations. Make no mistake, the rise of technologically enhanced media (smartphones, Internet, social media) gave new energy to the defense of human rights as social movement activists revealed, often for the first time, images that captured the suffering of their people. The sad reality of textual communication, regardless of how an author's textual brushstrokes may create compelling images within the mind of a reader, is that it is easier to dehumanize and distance oneself from the horrors articulated by a writer. The rise of new communication systems enabled the transmission of audio/video, through the Internet and cellular networks, and shattered walls of silence many regimes had maintained for decades. Thus, although some blame may be directed toward the Clinton administration and his constituency for allowing human rights abuses to persist in Burma, there should be a recognition that the humanization (the ability to view the humanity of the sufferer—a shared sense of human identity) of social movements had much to do with the proliferation of international communication networks than it did with a renewed sense of U.S. values.

Clinton's promotion of globalization may have stemmed from perceived benefits at home, but Berman and Goldman (1995) argue that "engagement abroad to promote global prosperity, enlarge democracy, and contain threats is designed to serve the ultimate goal and linchpin of U.S. strategy: domestic renewal" (p. 303). In essence, Clinton claimed that "all boats rise" in a prosperous global economy guided by the United States as an exceptional country, and while the United States could shape globalization according to its values, those values were beneficial to the world's peoples.

This idea of "exceptionalism" argues against some scholars' more realist viewpoints: American society exists outside the more common framework of self-interested political entities—the United States holds values that are guided by the good of many rather than by power-politics and thus deserves an elite status. Zarefsky (2014) pushes back against this argument:

> The bipolar world of the Cold War and the period since 1989 when the United States was the sole superpower are about to be replaced with the world of multiple centers of power and influence, a world in which no single nation will be able credibly to claim exceptional list status. (p. 116)

Zarefsky's assertion may describe an eventuality of Clinton's proposed goal of globally interdependent nations who rely on international institutions, such as the United Nations, to oversee security and the global economy, yet mobilizing broad domestic support for such a venture hinged on appeals rooted in economic self-interest. Further, Zarefsky's assessment says little of the U.S.'s economic advantages of engaging in global commerce and sharing the cost of security—even if that means some perceived loss of prestige.

## Clinton's Foreign Policy of Democracy Promotion

Clinton's foreign policy was founded on the proposition that globalization represented the best way to cure the tensions that defined relationships between countries who were previously obligated to take a side in the political and ideological détente between the USSR and the USA. Judis (2004) asserts that Clinton "contended that by removing trade and investment barriers, nations would move toward democracy. They would benefit, and so would the United States, which would discover new markets and outlets for investment" (p. 158). Clinton's proposed system of 'democracy through

economic interdependence' was not without merit, for while countries who adopted the values of the world community would be rewarded by global trade, those who violated its norms would be punished by withholding the economic benefits of that community. Taylor (2010) offers, "A 1997 National Association of Manufacturers study, for instance, claimed that thirty-five countries were the target of new American sanction from 1993-1996 alone" (p. 34). These sanctions were effective because of the absence of post-Cold War Russia's reluctance to veto U.S. propositions in the UN Security Council, its inability to fund U.S. enemies, and the loss of prestige that communist ideology had previously enjoyed. Taylor further concludes, "Under the bipolar international structure of the Cold War period, the Soviet Union was able to directly undermine U.S. sanction efforts in a number of ways," and "politically, it was able to exercise its veto powers in the UN Security Council (UNSC) to block American efforts to levy sanction through this institution" (p. 35). These sanctions became further effective as regimes, resistant to U.S. values, saw their more compliant neighbors financially benefit from their trade with the West. Thus, the end of the Cold-War bilateral power struggle made a system of global interdependence possible; furthermore, it made multilateral engagement possible through the U.S.'s expressed desire to share the responsibility of global governance.

Clinton's trade centered foreign policies, which sought to eventuate democratic reform, created more bilateral and multilateral economic partnerships than any previous administration. McCormick (2000) explains, "The Clinton administration signed over 270 trade liberalization pacts with other countries during its tenure" (p. 75). These pacts helped facilitate trade, which benefitted U.S. corporations, and it was hoped that

multilateral cooperation would usher in a new era of interdependent prosperity. In a speech at American University, Clinton (1993) outlines the underpinnings of this position: "Our leadership is especially important for the world's new in emerging democracies," for "to grow and deepen their legitimacy, to foster a middle class and a civic culture, they need the ability to tap into a growing global economy" (p. 11). Thus, Clinton's foreign policy proposed that the establishment and survival of democracy throughout the world was more likely to arise through economic benefits that legitimized that particular form of government.

Clinton believed that the efficacy of U.S. foreign policies that facilitated democratic enlargement, through global commerce, was only possible through multilateral relationships with international institutions. Clinton offered an optimistic viewpoint that uncertainty and existential threats which defined the Cold War were at an end. Brzezinski (2007) explains, "The case for multilateral cooperation henceforth was to be derived less from the fearful imperatives of international security and more from the beneficent promise of global interdependence" (p. 33). There was a sense that the long-standing military presence of the United States was no longer needed, and further intrusion into the political affairs of sovereign nations was an expensive method of engagement that was unpopular domestically and internationally. Indeed, Clinton came into office promising to reduce the U.S. military commitments abroad and focus the attention of his administration to the domestic economy, and the means by which Clinton proposed to accomplish this was through ceding greater responsibility for international security to the United Nations (Berman & Goldman, 1995). Clinton (cited in Berman &

Goldman, 1995) remarked that the United States "cannot solve every problem and must not become the world's policeman" (p. 300).

Clinton's desire to bolster the position of the United Nations as arbiter of international justice and guarantor of security meant that his formulation of his foreign policy would be sometimes be dependent on gaining international consensus—many perceived this as his inability for foreign policy leadership. Dumbrell (2009) explains, "His instinct was always to try to solve problems, but not to commit a course action until consensus—certainly consensus in his own administration, but also as far as possible nationally and internationally—had been achieved" (p. 35). Clinton's sense that an international system could not eventuate while one power unilaterally intervened and that self-interested intervention disadvantaged other members of the world community. J. A. Edwards (2008) maintains "in the age of globalization America's power to lead was great, but as we still needed the assistance of others it must share the burden of leadership" (p. 54). Further, a continued policy of unilateral intervention would obligate the United States to engage in expensive and unpopular international campaigns and draw funds away from domestic programs which could more clearly benefit the U.S. citizens. Clinton saw little political advantage to continuing Cold-War foreign policies.

Clinton's shift to multilateral engagement did not mean that he wished to acquiesce to increasingly popular isolationist viewpoints and withdraw from the world altogether. Clinton (2006) remarks, "Because the post-cold war world was increasingly interdependent, our country could not afford to withdraw from the world's problems; neither could we solve them on our own" (p. vii). However, critics counter that Clinton

overestimated the advantages of globalization. Hyland (1999) argues, "Too often the first Clinton administration had glorified internationalism and multilateralism, the UN and collective security, and the necessity of achieving a moral consensus while scoffing at such crude concepts as the balance of power" (p. 201). Clinton's critics saw the multilateral cooperation as a loss of U.S. leadership and a departure from U.S. perogative to act unilaterally to preserve its sovereign interests. Judis (2004) defends Clinton's global vision and argues, "By acting multilaterally in the Persian Gulf and the Balkans, George H. W. Bush and Clinton were able to deflect charges that they were trying to impose America's will on nations" (p. 205). Thus, both Clinton and George H. W. Bush's creation of multilateral relationships facilitated the perception that the United States would be a receptive partner who respected consensus-making international bodies. Henriksen (1996) concludes:

> The forty-second president interjected a Wilsonian notion, merging the challenge to U.S. interests with international ones, by adding the phrase "*or the will and conscience of the international community is defied* [emphasis added], we will act, with peaceful diplomacy whenever possible, with force when necessary." (p. 7)

After decades of Cold War containment strategies, where U.S. foreign policy pitted the needs and values of indigenous peoples against its containment of the Soviet Union, Clinton's vocal support for the international community elevated the prestige of the United States, while eliciting much-needed goodwill from its global partners.

## Clinton's Foreign Policy of Human Rights

While it is certain that public interest is constrained by the limitations of national issues, a president, through a continuum of speeches, will utilize the norms and

cultural values of his universal audience to persuade the relevance of an issue. Bostdorff (1994) explains, "Chief executives, as caretakers of the nation's highest office, can also easily draw on traditional American values and historical examples to provide additional legitimation" (p. 6). In order to facilitate national consensus on his issue, a president must draw from a rhetorical sensitivity of the values that help construct the worldviews of his audience, and position arguments as reasonable for his universal audience (Perelman & Olbrecht-Tyteca, 2008). Stuckey (2009) offers the case of Jimmy Carter and his efforts to constitutively position human rights as an important element in U.S. foreign policy agendas:

> Both the U.S. public and media began to accept human rights as a legitimate area of concern, and while human rights will probably never be a leading issue on the national agenda, it has retained the status it gained during the Carter years. (p. 26)

Carter argued for the adoption of his human rights policy by locating American values of fairness and humane treatment, and through rigorous and sustained negotiation of the validity of his proposition, he gradually shifted the worldviews of the U.S. public and members of Congress.

Human rights were presented within conversations that U.S. culture had been having about foreign policies that were considered to be incongruent with its values. However, recall that the rhetorical president seeks to argue that a policy is reasonable in ways that intersect with the worldviews of an audience, and Carter exemplifies the power of the rhetorical diplomacy through his successful reshaping of how U.S. foreign policy is formulated long after the end of his administration. Stuckey (2009) asserts that "an

audience may be led incrementally to very different positions than those initially held," for "education and persuasion are both effects that may well be seen only in the long term" (p. 37).

Clinton's adoption of human rights as a central feature of his foreign policy may have been in response to growing pressure to back away from previous administration policies, which sacrificed American values for strategic gains against the USSR. In his first presidential campaign, Clinton repeatedly criticized George H. W. Bush's alignment with regimes who had repeatedly violated human rights. Brzezinski (2007) explains the connection between Clinton's platform of globalization and its connection to human rights:

> By giving it [globalization] rhetorical recognition—which helped legitimate America's new superpower status in international public opinion—Clinton projected an appealing image of a young leader sensitive to the technological and ecological dilemmas confronting humanity, aware of the moral deficiencies of the global status quo, and ready to mobilize mankind in a common effort to cope with problems no longer susceptible to resolution by individual nations. (p. 93)

Brzezinski reveals that Clinton's political agenda stemmed from a rhetorical sensitivity that his domestic and international constituency were no longer willing to tolerate continued infractions of values, such as the respect for human rights. Carter's defense of human rights, somewhat unpopular during his administration, could not penetrate domestic adherence to Cold War doctrines that proposed victory over the Soviet Union—even at the expense of human rights. However, Stuckey's (2009) earlier claim, that Carter's rhetorical elevation of human rights in American society, holds merit here, for Clinton used human rights as a way to extend U.S. leadership into world affairs.

Signaling potential U.S. assistance to social movements throughout the world, the Clinton administration's vocal criticism of human rights abusers gave hope to many oppressed peoples that their years of struggle may be at an end. In the early months of Clinton's first terms, Secretary of State Warren Christopher (1993) announced support for "every prisoner of conscience, every victim of torture, every individual denied basic human rights" (n.p.). The first years of the Clinton administration increased pressure on human rights abusers through a variety of measures such as UN resolutions, multilateral sanctions, and rhetorical pressure which shamed violators and limited their access to world markets. Soderburgh (2006) explains, "The Clinton administration helped establish the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and cosponsored subsequent resolution for human rights improvements in China, Russia, Cuba, Iran, and Iraq" (p. 98). Thus, the Clinton administration signified a new dedication for human rights.

Clinton's rhetorical support for human rights was in many ways at odds with his greater goals of multilateral cooperation, for although human rights were centrally important, financial returns were seen as more important than taking a moral stand. Clinton's insistence that China institute human rights reforms, prior to renewal of its Most Favored Nation (MFN) status, evaporated in response to pressure within the United States and from industry trade groups. M. Cox (1995) argues, "There was bound to be a very real conflict of interest: between promoting American economic objective on the one hand and supporting the cause of human rights on the other," and "one hardly needed a crystal ball to know which one the United States was most likely to sacrifice in an age

of geo-economics" (p. 37). M. Cox's realist viewpoint, that Clinton sacrificed moral high ground in return for the economic benefits of trade, conflicts with the position of Clinton administration officials. In an address to the National Geographic society, Clinton (1997a) defends his position of trade first, democracy second:

> Over time, the more we bring China into the world the more the world will bring freedom to China. China's remarkable economic growth is making China more and more dependent on other nations for investment, for markets, for energy, for ideas. These ties increase the need for the stronger rule of law, openness, and accountability. (n.p.)

In his speech, and throughout his administration, Clinton offers globalization as a way to create an interdependence which would make totalitarian regimes more susceptible to both cultural and political influences from the world (in reality, the West) they would otherwise be able to resist in isolation.

M. Cox's (1995) critique is somewhat valid in interrogating Clinton's China policy, for in dealing with party's with far less economic clout, Clinton seems far more willing to enact punitive sanctions. Latter chapters in this dissertation will argue that the willingness to engage resistant regimes rarely occurs without *both* interlocutors standing to gain something in return for their efforts. It is unreasonable to expect any nation to expend its resources for the sake of altruistic motives, yet this is not to say that humans do not lack empathy in their international relations. However, such empathy and values-based policy comes from the humanization of indigenous peoples through first-hand experiences, through agenda-setting presidential rhetoric, or through media that compel the viewer to identify with the suffering of others. However, there are numerous examples of humans who allow their self-interest to define their treatment of

others—even when faced with the visual evidence of their mistreatment. Battersby and Siracusa (2014) argue that "corporations stand accused by development, environmental, and human rights groups of engaging in practices detrimental to the well-being of people and communities across the developing world" (p. 130). Clinton's deference to consensus made his foreign policy susceptible to influence from corporations, governments, and individuals who stood to benefit from trade with nations who had committed human rights abuses, and his desire for global stability often trumped his moral stand against human rights abuses. Further, Clinton's human rights concessions in return for engagement, although unproven, were theoretically sound policy perspectives—especially given domestic constraints on coercive action. Chang (2011) concludes pessimistically:

> Overall, it seemed that the democratic enlargement policy could be seen as an effort the Clinton team consistently made to craft themselves for the post-Cold War world; while at the same time, the pragmatic engagement policy, especially with regard to humanitarian intervention issues and the changing international environment, caused disarray and confusion. (p. 68)

By locating human rights as a central tenet of his foreign policy, Clinton would feel pressure to intervene in cases where diplomacy failed to stop abuses—as was the case of Kosovo. Human rights in this way is connected to humanitarian intervention because the United States loses credibility if it defends human rights, as central to world community values, and then refuses to act when the will of the international community is defied. Toward the end of Clinton's tenure, domestic and international issues would serve to further complicate the inherent tension between fostering a global economy while espousing a strong position against human rights abuses.

## Analysis: Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright: *Pre-taped Remarks for Radio Free Asia's Special Broadcast to Burma*, May 27, 1999

Clinton's second term choice of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright[3] marked a shift in the level of caution that the State Department had previously employed with Warren Christopher.[4] In many ways, Warren Christopher's hesitant style of diplomacy was a holdover from a Cold War era where Secretaries of State endeavored to draw regimes into the sphere of U.S. containment against communism—they were not necessarily interested in chastising and reprimanding regimes guilty of human rights violations (Berman & Goldman, 1995). Albright's flamboyance and outgoing style of rhetorical diplomacy also reflected Clinton's new interest in foreign affairs. As his presidency became embattled with allegations of sexual misconduct with Monica Lewinsky, Clinton became more involved in global issues to preserve his legacy and to give the impression that he still had the capacity to lead (McCormick, 2000). Secretary of State Albright's (1999) *Pre-taped Remarks for Radio Free Asia's Special Broadcast to Burma* is important because it is a surprisingly candid account of the actions of a regime who would been overlooked and ignored for years. Apart from sanctions and a few sparse mentions of Burma in Clinton speeches, Burma was not seriously addressed in the first term of the Clinton administration. Albright's remarks

[3]Secretary of State Albright served under the Clinton administration from January 23, 1997 to January 20, 2001.

[4]Secretary of State Warren Christopher served under the Clinton administration from January 20, 1993 to January 17, 1997.

are also important because she overtly targeted a Burmese audience through the vehicle of Radio Free Asia as a way to build alliances with democracy social movements within Burma. Radio Free Asia was also beamed throughout Asia and would have been heard by ASEAN leaders. A central feature of rhetorical diplomacy is that an administration uses speech acts as a way to pressure a regime from within and without. As noted previously, because it has the ability to most effectively pressure the regime, the United States would seek to form an alliance with ASEAN. The United States had long been using BBC, VOA, in RFA to subvert communist ideology in Asia; Albright's remarks would have been broadly heard throughout Burma. This speech directly subverts the regimes authority and power, while offering moral and political support for the embattled National League for Democracy. Thus, Albright's rhetorical diplomacy centers on shifting the political center of gravity away from the regime by defining the NLD as Burma's only legitimate governing body. It is a brilliant rhetorical tour de force which minimizes the legitimacy of the regime, not for its own political gain domestically, but assists an embattled social movement for humanitarian purposes.

Finally, choosing the vehicle of Radio Free Asia is telling here as well, for Albright hopes to reduce the legitimacy of regime, for her speech is also directed to southeast Asian citizens whose leaders invited SLORC to enter ASEAN and did little to stem human rights abuses. This speech is an indictment of those who have aided the regime to refuse the will of its citizens and oppress pro-democratic members and leaders. Albright (1999) begins her exhortation that Asian peoples should pressure Burmese leaders to reform:

> May 27, 1999 marks the ninth anniversary of the last free elections held in Burma, the last time the people of that country had the opportunity to express their own will about how and by whom their nation would be led. By an overwhelming margin, the Burmese chose candidates from the National League for Democracy, or NLD, which won more than eighty percent of the Parliamentary seats. Tragically, the results of that election were not accepted or recognized by Burma's military junta. Instead of yielding power, the military has abused it, denying the people of Burma not only democracy but virtually any free expression of political and other basic human rights. (n.p.)

Of immediate interest is Albright's use of the anniversary of Burmese elections 9 years ago—this pre-positions the listener to feel a sense of shame that a despotic regime continues to operate freely in Asia. It also is a thinly veiled reprimand of ASEAN leaders who invited Burma into the association 2 years prior—ultimately they enabled the regime to persist in its human rights abuses. The use of the anniversary is also important for the regime itself: Albright calls the junta's bluff, for the SLORC defended its power as a short-term necessity to quell the violent tensions within its borders so that free and fair elections could be soon held without violence. Albright shifts political legitimacy to Aung San Suu Kyi and moves to reduce the legitimacy of the military junta by listing its failings and its ruthless desire for power. Schimmelfinneg (2001) explains how rhetorical action works to compel resistant actors to reform:

> Rhetorical action would not be effective if the actors were not concerned with their credibility and legitimacy as community members, and they would not be concerned if they did not, to some extent, identify themselves and link their political existence with the community. (p. 65)

When Burma entered into ASEAN, it created an opening for engagement that did not previously exist, but Clinton chose not to take advantage of the opportune moment (*kairos*) and exert pressure on ASEAN to compel regime leaders to reform. In the final

analysis, Clinton felt it was not so bad that Burma joined ASEAN if it opened a new path of engagement.

Albright's shaming the actions of one despotic nation thus exposes how the values of other world communities have been violated. While world leaders may have economic interests that cause them to ignore Burma's failings—their legitimacy as elected officials is brought into question as they enable human rights violations. Here Albright (1999) connects Burma to the broader values of the international community:

> The United Nations General Assembly, the European Union, the United States and many others have urged the junta to change its policies and put Burma back on the democratic path. We have pointed out that the prosperity and long-term stability of Burma depend on a political system that reflects the views and hopes of the Burmese people. And we have stressed the importance of initiating a meaningful dialogue with the democratic opposition, including the leader of the NLD, Aung San Suu Kyi, and with representatives of ethnic minority groups. (n.p.)

Albright adds credibility to her call for reform by listing powerful and prestigious nations who are central to the global economic system. This rhetorical strategy employs act/essence relational logic. Here, Albright positions the United Nations, European Union, and United States as world bodies whose values are the values of the world community and indeed the values of their Asian audience. The democratic path proposed by Albright represents the hopes in views of the Burmese people themselves. In the rhetorical turn of the force of logic, Albright defines the junta's acts as a violation of the essence of democracy—a democratic path desired by the Burmese people, which conveniently falls within the values of the world community. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (2008) explain the relational logic of act/essence coexistence:

> Normal use conforms to the essence. Abuse must be detached from it or it will modify it profoundly. However, as long as the term abuse is used, it is a sign that one wishes to preserve the essence, that is not at issue. If liberal supporters of capitalism favor the control of profits, they will say that they do so in order to correct an abuse of capitalism into keep it in essentially healthy economic structure. (p. 328)

Here, Albright points to the abuse of the junta as a way to protect the essence of Burmese values—by rhetorically defining the essence of the democratic path as "prosperity and stability," she reveals the true abuse of the regime. Her strategy is thus not one of intrusion, but defense of world norms which are violated by the aberrant regime. Thus, Albright elevates the credibility of U.S. foreign-policy by positioning her argument as an explanation of the situation in Burma as it presently stands. She becomes a presenter of facts and effectively distances her argument from the troublesome history of Western imperial intrusion into Asian affairs. She represents both the world community and the Asian community, and as the defender of Burmese hopes and views, she sheds the subjectively oriented position of "Secretary of State."

Albright (1999) then moves to describe how the regime has lost its legitimacy with the their people:

> The people of Burma are paying a terrible price for the arrogance and brutality of their leaders. Burma's economy is sliding further and further behind its Asian neighbors. Burma's universities are closed. The country is plagued by a terrible outbreak of HIV/AIDS, which has been aggravated by the nation's status as a leading center of the drug trade. The authorities in Rangoon have promised their people stability, prosperity and democracy, but have delivered on none of those promises. (n.p.)

Albright's strategy here is to list the aberrations of Burma's poor state of affairs in contest with the improving economies of Burma's Asian neighbors. This strategy is

effective as it both reveals, in a hierarchy of increasingly terrible conditions: lack of education, disease, drug trade, and the resultant instability of Burma is unique in the Asian community. Pointing to the drug trade is particularly important: at the time southeast-Asian nations were increasingly threatened by the wealth and power accumulated by drug lords in the border region of Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos. Further, Albright's rhetorical diplomacy seeks to make Burma an outlier with its Asian neighbors for two reasons: as a way to solidify U.S. alliance with the NLD and elevate NLD prestige within Burma. She tells her Burmese audience that the situation in their country is abnormal amongst Burma's immediate neighbors. As a way to forge alliance with her Asian audience, Albright positions Burma as being abnormal and dangerous to their well being in her claim that Burmese regime leaders do not represent the norms of ASEAN. Albright positions her argument in this way because the only parties who are able to persuade Burmese leaders to reform are the Burmese people and ASEAN. While Albright's limited remarks arguably should not have been the extent of U.S. engagement with ASEAN on this subject, it reflects the shape of rhetorical diplomacy by the Clinton administration.

This was not the first time the Clinton administration pointed out to southeast-Asian leaders the Burmese regime's role in the drug trade. Rotberg (1998) explains, "President Clinton in April [1998], and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright at the ASEAN meeting in July, called the SLORC a collection of drug trafficking thugs" (p. 2). Albright elevates the junta's illegitimacy as rulers. While the SLORC positioned itself as protectors of the people, through their voiced intention to bring stability to

Burma, Albright argues that Burma is anything but stable and rhetorically discards their proverbial *raison d'être.* This is an effective strategy because U.S. attempts to prevent Burma's admission into ASEAN had previously been met with resistance. Although a history of colonial imperial intervention perhaps precluded U.S. influence, ASEAN may have had an underlying strategy at work. Charney (2009) explains, "ASEAN, while paying lip service to a policy of constructive engagement, generally followed a hands-off approach to problems in Burma for fear it would force the SLORC to be even more resistant to change" (p. 184). Albright's strategy, therefore, is to demonstrate that coddling the regime has guided Burma into chaos and such enabling behavior endangers the southeast Asian community. Further, during the Clinton administration there was a growing sense that ASEAN could not be trusted to pressure its member states to reform its human rights abuses.

Albright (1999) then describes how a transition to democracy offers hope to Burma: "In recent decades, peaceful transitions to democracy have occurred on five continents," and "there is no reason it should not happen in Burma, and no reason for the military to fear that its own rightful role in Burmese society would be jeopardized as a result" (n.p.). While Albright offers the transition to democracy as a process that need not be chaotic, she implicitly ignores the recent history of violence which occurred in southeast Asian transitions to democracy (Thailand is an outlier in this regard). Perhaps some in the regime may have a legitimate fear that reforms will also result in instability, for there was little evidence that a transition to democracy would be anything but violent—especially given the recent history in Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam,

Cambodia, and so forth. Further, while this strategy holds little credibility with the junta, it certainly holds little water for ASEAN leaders, many of whom had in recent memory experienced the violence of political transition.

Finally, Albright (1999) offers to the Burmese people a message of morale boosting hope:

> Our message to the NLD and other democratic forces in Burma is to have faith. The world is aware of your struggle and deeply sympathetic to your cause. We will continue to support your right to a voice in determining the future of your country. And we look forward to the day we can welcome a democratic Burma into the community of free nations. (n.p.)

During many of my conversations with NLD leaders, the issue of hope and morale was a constant, and while the United States did not directly give material support to democratic social movements in Burma, the moral support of U.S. administrations was important. Here, Albright asks social movement leaders to continue on with their struggle. While many of those leaders were either on the run, living in exile, or in prison, the recognition that U.S. leaders were aware of their struggle may have been important. Albright also adds credibility to their cause by indicating that the United States supports the NLD. In my interview with Jimmy Ko (2014), he explained "Americans are very important to us because it is the leading democracy country, the leading of the world, and the main supporter of our democracy movement" (Appendix D). Jimmy explained that knowing that America was supporting their cause, helped them continue with their cause.

## Complications in Clinton's Foreign Policy Paradigms

The second term of Clinton's presidency was met with significant fractures in the system of partnerships he had worked to create. In his 1993 United Nations Address,

in the infancy of his administration, Clinton (1993b) foreshadowed the turmoil that would persist throughout his presidency:

> From beyond nations, economic and technological forces all over the globe are compelling the world towards integration. These forces are fueling a welcome explosion of entrepreneurship and political liberalization. But they also threaten to destroy the insularity and independence of national economies, quickening the pace of change and making many of our people feel more insecure. At the same time, from within nations, the resurgent aspirations of ethnic and religious groups challenge governments on terms that traditional nation states cannot easily accommodate. (n.p.)

Clinton's use of "tradition of nation states" is telling—it implies that the modern world is based on the peace of the Westphalian system and were capable of peacefully transitioning to a liberalized global community. This assessment at best minimized the history of détente in the great power conflicts between the Soviet Union and the United States, for the erosion of traditional communities began long before the end of the Cold War in 1989. The contest of power precipitated in nations throughout the world upset the political development of indigenous government who became caught in proxy wars between the USSR and USA. Thus, it is far more likely that the violence and instability, that ensued following the Cold War, had more to do with the reaction to decades of political intrusion into traditional nation states than with their resistance to integrating into a globally interdependent system. An examination of Clinton's early rhetorical diplomacy is important here because it is indicative of U.S. foreign policy failings, which began long before Clinton—policies which neglected to view the leaders of nation states as having needs, values, and attitudes. This rhetorical sensitivity is critical to forming alliances with world leaders. Engagement that takes place from a top-down approach is

faulty because it does not view regime leaders, terrible as they seem to be, as having needs that must be met if they are to capitulate to U.S. diplomatic demands. From the perspective of rhetorical diplomacy, a president forms alliances with multiple partners to facilitate reform: marginalized social movement actors, regime allies (governments, transnational corporations, etc.), and regime's citizens themselves. An adept rhetorical president will be responsive to his audience: formulating and articulating policy in ways which are congruent with those whom he wishes to persuade or co-opt as collaborators against a particular regime. Rhetorical diplomacy is unrealized without the final step of engagement where the United States negotiates a solution. Furthermore, a president who seeks to effectively engage must be mindful of a leader's needs and values in order to reach a diplomatic solution.

A key problem of Clinton's plan to integrate nation states into a globally interdependent system was growing domestic resistance to U.S. leadership in foreign affairs. Nye (2004) explains, "Both Republican and Democrats in Congress responded largely to domestic special interests and often treated foreign policy as a mere extension of domestic politics" (p. 27). This attention to a perhaps uniformed or misinformed public, whose political allegiance shifted with perceived winds of domestic economic success, caused increasing unpredictability in Clinton's foreign policy. Brzezinski (2007) contends with this position: "In fairness to Clinton, the highly volatile state of the world made it difficult to define clear foreign policy priorities and identify the principle geopolitical threats" (p. 89). M. Cox (1995) further explains, "The international system has become an increasingly complex arena with many more actors who are simply not

prepared any longer to follow the United States or submit to its demands" (p. 4). Thus, Clinton's fluid response to uncertain and unpredictable exigencies, resulting from the decline of Soviet power, often gave the impression to enemies and allies that the United States had abandoned substantive leadership in world affairs.

Ceding the responsibility for global security to the world community also meant that the United States may be drawn into conflicts on the basis of humanitarian causes —causes that may not be of immediate strategic benefit to the United States. Likewise, Clinton's espousal of multilateral cooperation also meant that the United States had to acquiesce to the international community—even Clinton expressed alarm when asked to intervene in situations where humanitarian abuses were obvious. Kolodziej and Kanet (2008) explain that the Clinton administration "submitted itself to the consent of its members and resisted the call for the use of ground troops to invade Serbia because there was a lack of unanimous NATO support for such a military strike" (p. 12). Clinton's vision of an interdependent global community seemed less functional as the promise of a peaceful post-Cold War was replaced by multiple locations of ethnically motivated violence, the rise of terrorism, and increasing international insecurity. Rubinstein et al. (2000) conclude, "The prospering international economy was proving no cure-all for the world's security concerns, ethnic conflicts, and brushfire outbreaks of hostilities" (p. 4). The panacea of globalization, once lauded as able to facilitate the cooperation necessary for peace, eventually seemed less able to create stability, much less create a paradigm that could explain the source of new outbreaks of hostility.

Perhaps Clinton's vision of an interdependent global community did not anticipate the humanitarian crises that occurred during his administration (Haiti, Rwanda, Somalia, Kosovo), yet his insistence on multilateral cooperation both alleviated the expense of costly military adventures while enhancing the U.S.'s public image abroad (Bennett, 2014). In addition to his insistence on multilateral cooperation, Clinton also sought to solve humanitarian crises through diplomacy. The rise of human rights as a central foreign policy issue for his administration, as well as for the UN, also drew the world community into conflicts which may have previously been ignored due to their inconclusive strategic benefits. In any case, violations of human rights would no longer be tolerated and would justify intervention in counties whose strategic importance was of little value. Even as international pressure mounted to address these humanitarian crises, Clinton still sought diplomatic solutions. Chang (2011) explains, "It is important to note that in the cases of intervention of Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo, the Clinton administration was engaged in diplomatic efforts and sought a political solution first, with the use of military force always the last resort" (p. 164). As conflict erupted throughout his tenure, Clinton's persistence in achieving diplomatic solutions to violence, perhaps naively, revealed both unwillingness to commit U.S. troops but a greater belief that rhetorical diplomacy could better achieve what military intervention could not: a lasting peace. Indeed, in the final 2 years of his presidency, Clinton expended what little political capital he had left in trying to facilitate peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Peace accords. Although this particular diplomatic effort failed, Clinton ushered in a new policy, the "Clinton Doctrine": a way of diplomatically solving world problems as an alternative to

unsustainable Cold War containment policies, costly military coercion, and the futile retreat into isolation.

## The End of an Era—Clinton's Final Years

Clinton's foreign policy in his second term in some ways marked a departure from his insistence on multilateral action as he endeavored to respond to public opinion and Republican rhetoric, which painted him as a weak foreign policy president. Dumbrell (2009) explains, "The Congress was a major factor in pushing Clinton towards unilateralist positions in the second term, and left its mark on both foreign and defense policy" (p. 40). As the end of his tenure in office drew near, Clinton found that he was less able to pass substantive domestic policy. Quirk and Hinchliffe (1995) explain, "Rather than try to work with Clinton to find common ground and achieve mutually beneficial policy change, Republicans were disposed to block his initiatives and attack and attack them with popular rhetoric" (pp. 263-264).

Further complicating Clinton's ability to execute his foreign policies were allegations of sexual misconduct with White House Staffer Monica Lewinsky—this scandal would culminate in impeachment proceedings, which further eroded his rhetorical strengths. This scandal and Republican hostility to Clinton's domestic policies would compel Clinton to seek his legacy in other areas of governance— namely foreign affairs. Miles (2013) explains:

> Paradoxically, Clinton was better able to exert his influence on the international stage towards the end of the 1990's and, to a degree, override domestic constraints and allied concerns, as a result of America recovering from fear of economic decline and assuming its position as the undisputed global hegemon;

> or, as Secretary of State Madeline Albright phrased it, "the indispensable nation." (pp. 67-68)

Clinton's rhetorical presidency, unable to find solid ground domestically, turned to foreign policy as a way to maintain the perception that he was still leading. The power of the rhetorical presidency is always built on the perception that the president is still in the position to lead. Facing the prospect of becoming a lame duck with years left in office, Clinton reaffirmed his position of power by relocating his rhetorical presidency where it received less challenge from increasingly hostile Congress. Thus, Clinton's fall from domestic power forced him to focus on affairs where he still could exert his rhetorical power and facilitated a focus on foreign affairs, which he may have otherwise not have had—a focus which disagreed with his first presidential campaign against George H. W. Bush, whom he criticized as being too fixated on foreign affairs.

## Conclusion

My explanation of the central features of Bill Clinton's foreign policy in this chapter does not propose to fully describe his administration, for that project is beyond the scope of any written work, let alone a dissertation. Rather, my goal in this chapter is to provide an overview of Clinton's political strategy to discuss his rhetorical actions related to the Burmese pro-democracy movement. Further, the description of Clinton's leadership in globalization, human rights, and multilateral engagement are critical to understanding the choices of the Clinton administration concerning an embattled Burmese social movement fighting for survival in an era of post-Cold War transition.

As the first truly post-Cold War president (in the sense that Clinton never presided *during* the Cold War), Bill Clinton oversaw the dawn of a new and unpredictable era. Clinton's belief in free-market trade underpinned American leadership in every area of the world community. Clinton's leadership in human rights, both domestically and abroad, also helped redefine the values of a world community, and while this world community reflects human rights values, violations of human rights are nonetheless unacceptable to global centers of power. Without the elevation of human rights as a minimum standard of conduct in the world community, perhaps constituencies would not pressure their government and corporations to dissolve partnerships without regimes which oppress their people. The central political prominence of human rights is significant upon the recognition that social movements may only attract support for their cause in the international arena so long as that community views their oppression as a violation of their values.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was far more forceful and directly sought ways to pressure Burma to reform, but the *kairos* of rhetorical diplomacy may not have surfaced during Albright's tenure. Burma was a member of ASEAN for 2 years already, there were no uprisings, no natural disaster with which to pressure Burma. While Christopher failed to seize the *kairos* of when ASEAN invited Burma into their association, Albright simply may not have had the same opportunity to successfully pressure Burma. These remarks therefore, may have been important for the embattled Burmese pro-democracy movements morale and persistence, as well as for maintaining U.S. alliance with Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD.

Burmese pro-democracy leaders, such as Dr. Tun Hliang (2014) indicated that American moral support did not have as great an impact: "yeah [the support was] doing something but not so effective just moral support," and "as you know the U.S. gave support but gave nothing" (Appendix B). Recall that Clinton's foreign policy resisted military intervention and sought out multilateral cooperation, and while ASEAN leaders were against any sort of Western intrusion in Asian affairs, there was little that the United States could do to materially help the NLD. Dr. Hlaing does point out a sense of indignation that the United States did not do more to protect and help the Burmese people. A constant thread that flowed through my interviews was that the United States of America was the most powerful nation on earth—there was no country that could stand up to their power, so why did not the United States intervene in Burma? That opinion of the United States, at least during the Clinton administration, was not undeserved—after all, the United States had just gained its status as the world's sole superpower.

In Burma, the prestige and power of the United States seems limitless—there is no other country that is better, brighter, and more advanced. Turning to the George W. Bush administration, that sense of power and prestige translated into actionable foreign policies which used force where diplomacy did not work. Most of the Burmese pro-democracy leaders I spoke with also indicated their support for peaceful solutions—military solutions did not appeal to a social movement whose ideological underpinnings were rooted in nonviolence. Thus, while Clinton's globalization project did pave the way for future presidents (of course upon the *kairos* of influence), his

foreign policy did agree with the philosophical foundation of nonviolence of NLD leaders and perhaps sustained the movement through attention-getting speeches, alliance forming rhetorical diplomacy, and moral support.

Finally, Clinton's presidency reveals the difficulty in shifting foreign policy ideology after decades of Soviet containment, and while critics of Clinton abound in numbers, there is little question that this transitional moment in American leadership presented an unpredictable and volatile political and security climate. The vacuum of the Cold War balance of power facilitated the rise of previously contained despotic regimes, as well as a new shift in presidential power domestically and abroad. No longer able to claim legitimate unilateral action in the affairs of sovereign states, Clinton had to formulate a policy that both enabled the United States to shape globalization to its advantage, while preserving its image as a benevolent leader. Domestically, the absence of the Cold War meant that political parties and the Executive and Legislative Branches could refuse to cooperate with each other without endangering the national security of the United States. While the Cold War compelled Congress to work with a President, the post-Cold War saw the rise of caustic rhetoric which comparatively lacked civility, compromise, and often reduced political debates to little more than bickering. As we move from the Clinton administration to George W. Bush's tenure, the brewing instability of a post-Cold War world had already foreshadowed the violence to come in early years of the second millennium. As with other presidents, Clinton's actions in foreign affairs would leave a lasting policy framework which his successor would both adopt and bend to his ideological view.

# CHAPTER 4

## America in a Post 9/11 World: George W. Bush's Foreign Policy and Burma Democracy Rhetoric

Bush's election did not represent a referendum on Clinton's policies, and prior to 9/11 Bush was a relatively weak president with little political capital—stemming from a nation which was largely divided over his election. This is an important notion in the rhetorical presidency, for a president is only able to push his policies through Congress if he is able to elicit public favor. However, because of his presence in the public eye, even a president who is not popular with the majority is still able to mobilize his constituency to pressure Congress to pass his policies.

When George W. Bush initially took office in 2001, he had little interest in foreign affairs and preferred to delegate that responsibility to others—of course, the attacks on September 11, 2001 changed everything. In some ways Bush's post-9/11 foreign policy was a throwback to Cold War strategies, where the United States supported and propped up regimes who were friendly to U.S. interests. Bush's caustic rhetoric, coupled with the instability created in his military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan, in many ways emboldened regimes which did not pose a threat to the United States. Although Bush did not propose direct military action against states which did not agree with "war on terror," he did work to impose even harsher sanctions against rogue states—including Burma. This may have demonstrated to the Burmese regime the extent of U.S. power and may have facilitated negotiations with the Obama Administration.

## The Evangelical Presidency: The United States as a Missionary of Freedom

Bush's pre 9/11 foreign policy formulation sought to overturn much of the multilateral relationships that the previous administration had worked to construct. Dumbrell (2009) explains that prior to his election, "The younger Bush's slogan—'Anything but Clinton'—was an indication not only of Bush 43's eagerness to reject the legacy of Clinton, but also encapsulated a move away from the pragmatic, cautious conservatism of his father" (p. 170). Rather than presenting a substantive policy that responded to the exigencies of post-Cold War international relations, the Bush administration sought to return to neo-conservative policies that were popular during the Reagan administration. Soderburgh (2006) claims, "The nine months prior to September 11 of George W. Bush's term set the United States on a collision course with much of the rest of the world" (p. 127). Although the United States retained its status as the world's sole military superpower, shifting back to unilateral foreign policies signaled a significant departure from the decade-long reformulation of foreign relations that began with the younger Bush's father. McMahon and Wedeman (2006) argue, "Even before 9/11, Bush exhibited what some in the international community saw as the arrogance of a self-conscious and self-engrossed hegemon" (p. 18). McMahon and Wedeman (2006) simplify the division over the continued American role in foreign affairs, for there was a growing sense in U.S. society that Clinton's multilateralism project ceded too much authority to international institutions and contributed to the decline of U.S. world power.

Bush did not coin the term "exceptional" or "indispensable" nation—that sense of America's role in shaping globalization had persisted throughout multiple administrations as U.S. military interventions were instrumental in guaranteeing the primacy of democracy in Europe and Asia. J. A. Edwards (2008) observes, "This attempt at constructing a coherent narrative for American foreign policy makes Bush more like his Cold War predecessors than his immediate one" (p. 163). In both his campaign and in his pre 9/11 administration, Bush criticized Clinton for intervening in foreign affairs where the United States would not gain strategically—indeed many critics of Clinton did not view humanitarian intervention as part of U.S. mandate abroad. Miles (2013) reports:

> There was no firm commitment to the promotion of democracy on the campaign trail nor in the first eight months of the administration, with Bush more concerned about limiting the cases where the US might involve itself in humanitarian intervention and nation-building. (p. 85)

Bush's campaign rhetoric also endeavored to construct a distinct political identity separate from Clinton. During his campaign, Bush responded to a growing consensus that the United States should look to its own domestic interests, and however Clinton had packaged U.S. economic benefits in the new global community, there was significant opposition to the obligations of safeguarding such a community. Thus, the voices who called for greater attention to national interest had yet to be convinced that the expense of U.S. involvement abroad was worth the incremental benefits at home.

Bush's significant lack of foreign affairs experience also represented a practical reason why he avoided taking strong positions on foreign policy. Taking a strategy from

Clinton's playbook against his father, campaign Bush scorned Al Gore's internationalist ideology, which sacrificed U.S. advantage in deference to foreign nations. Bush's inadequacies naturally meant that he needed to rely on cabinet members to formulate the foreign policy vision of his administration. Judis (2004) asserts that the Bush's neoconservative advisers "believed in transforming the world in America's image, but sought to do so through the unimpeded use of American power rather than through international cooperation and organization" (p. 171). Surrounding himself with neoconservative thinkers and ideologues, Bush's vision of America's role in global affairs was heavily influenced by more extreme points of view. Faulk (2009) assesses, "The neoconservative entourage surrounding the new president was championing a radical vision of the global dominance project that it inherited from the Clinton presidency" (p. x). Thus, Bush's pre-9/11 administration was ideologically predisposed to considering the world in troublesome ways for multilateral engagement, and the exigency of terrorism within U.S. borders provided ample proof that only the United States could guarantee its own safety. Further, as the exceptional nation, the United States should shape the world to reflect its values.

**Bush Foreign Policy: Unilateral Action**

Although the horrific events on September 11, 2001 certainly redirected U.S. involvement in foreign affairs, George W. Bush's governing philosophy did much to alienate existing allies and create new enemies abroad (Bostdorff et al., 2008; Greenstein, 2009; Hook & Spanier, 2010; Young, 2008). Hook and Spanier (2010) define the constitutive philosophy that governed George W. Bush's foreign policy:

> The Bush Doctrine, based on the "principled" projection of American power, viewed U.S. national interests as synonymous with global justice, peace, and prosperity. The doctrine's general effect, however, was to alarm the very governments it was meant to reassure. Instead of eliciting goodwill toward Washington, the prospect of world domination by any single government, whatever its declared motives or intentions, troubled large and small countries alike. (p. 320)

Bush's exceptionalism philosophy lauded American political and cultural values, yet the credibility of those values was undermined by hegemonic and unilateral actions that seemed to impose American interests over others (Young, 2008).

Table 1 reveals how in a world increasingly interconnected through globalism, U.S. intervention and overt political and military dominance had a chilling effect upon the relations of traditional allies (Hook & Spanier, 2010). Brzezinski (2007) argues, "The blend of neocon Manichaeanism and President Bush's newfound propensity for catastrophic decisiveness caused the post-9/11 global security solidarity with America to plunge from its historical zenith to its nadir" (p. 137). Although Brzezinski's argument that the Bush administration's reaction to the 9/11 attacks was perhaps ill conceived, a people who feel (and I use this word deliberately to describe the emotional reaction to violence) that their existence is threatened often react reflexively, and Bush's post 9/11 policies were widely favored by many U.S. citizens (Daalder & Lindsey 2003). Bush's rhetorical style worked well for U.S. audiences but served to create hostility with international audiences—this is the push and pull of rhetorical diplomacy: balancing the need for popularity with one's domestic audience while promoting U.S. power with international audiences. However, Bush's war on terror may have reminded world leaders of the military capabilities of the U.S. - this may have in some ways caused some

despotic leaders to head Bush administration threats. There are really two spheres of public opinion: national and international—both empower or restrict a president's ability to press a policy. Domestically, the president needs public approval in order to pressure Congress to pass his policies; but internationally the United States needs alliances for its economic, political, and security interests and policies. While agreement from both audiences is necessary, a president must hone his skills in rhetorical diplomacy in order to maintain his ability to press his policies in both arenas. Failing to press policies abroad will make a president look ineffectual and hurt a president's credibility at home, but failing to maintain domestic support limits the ability of a president to press policies to Congress.

Table 1
*Public Opinion of the United States Among NATO Allies, 1999-2007 (Percent Favorable)*

| Country | 1999-2000 (%) | April-May 2003 (%) | April-May 2007 (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Britain | 83 | 70 | 51 |
| Canada | 71 | 63 | 55 |
| France | 62 | 43 | 39 |
| Germany | 78 | 45 | 30 |
| Italy | 76 | 60 | 53 |
| Spain | 50 | 38 | 34 |
| Turkey | 52 | 15 | 9 |
| Mean | 67 | 48 | 39 |

*Note.* Adapted from *To See Ourselves as Others See Us: How Publics Abroad View the United States After 9/11*, by O. R. Hosti, 2008, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press (as cited in *American Foreign Policy Since World War II* [8th 3d.], by S. W. Hook & J. Spanier, 2010, Washington, DC: CQ Press), p. 348.

In stark contrast to the Clinton administration, Young (2008) contends that Bush returned to a Cold War foreign policy that led to direct military engagement in Iraq: "We have replaced the international communist conspiracy with the international terrorist conspiracy, rearming and refurbishing the rhetorical arsenal of containment and exceptionalism" (p. 177). In his 2002 *State of the Union Address,* George W. Bush (2002a) reveals the unilateral approach to foreign policy that has undermined U.S. diplomatic relations with the world community:

> We will develop and deploy effective missile defenses to protect America and our allies from sudden attack. And all nations should know: America will do what is necessary to ensure our nation's security. We'll be deliberate, yet time is not on our side. I will not wait on events while dangers gather. I will not stand by as peril draws closer and closer. The United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons. (n.p.)

In this statement, George W. Bush proposes unilateral action to preserve the interests of the United States. Although his proposed policy may legitimately seek to preserve U.S. national security, his rhetoric does not seek cooperation, but rather tells the world 'we don't need your permission' to defend our sovereign interests. George W. Bush tells world leaders here that their concerns will be ignored in favor of U.S. security, yet alienating potential allies in his war may ultimately impede his struggle against enemies who operate beyond borders. Threatening unilaterally to 'do what is necessary' is a rather brazen display of hegemonic rhetoric, where world interests are swept aside. Hirsh (2002) explains how Bush's rhetoric creates a caustic relationship with world leaders:

> But Bush, to judge by his actions, appears to believe in a kind of unilateral civilization. NATO gets short shrift, the United Nations is an afterthought, treaties are not considered binding, and the administration brazenly sponsors protectionist measures at home such as new steel tariffs and farm subsidies. Any compromise of Washington's freedom to act is treated as a hostile act. (p. 21)

Bush's communication of his foreign policy initiatives helps distance U.S. national security from the interests of the global community, for while terrorism remains an American problem that can only be solved by American leadership, there is little room for international input. Unilateralist rhetoric therefore disagrees with post-modern notions of U.S. national security interests functioning within a globalized world community, for cooperative international communities seek to protect their respective foreign interests through multilateral action (Lazar & Lazar, 2004). That unified cooperation is built upon the discursive interactions of world leaders who ostensibly respect the needs and opinions of each other.

In his 2002 *State of the Union Address,* President Bush (2002a) offers a binary position of "us" against "them" that does not permit any sort of middle ground for members of the world community:

> My hope is that all nations will heed our call and eliminate the terrorist parasites who threaten their countries and our own. Many nations are acting forcefully. Pakistan is now cracking down on terror, and I admire the strong leadership of President Musharraf. But some governments will be timid in the face of terror. And make no mistake about it: If they do not act, America will. (n.p.)

Bush presents a thinly veiled threat to those nations who, for any number of reasons, may be potentially hesitant in pursuing the Bush administration's request for military action. This statement elicits little cooperation from the world community, for while friends and allies may have misgivings about military engagement, Bush proposes that intervention

in the domestic affairs of sovereign states is necessary to combat terrorism. In Bush's paradigm, U.S. allies are only those who are willing to militarily engage the enemies of U.S. interests, and those nations who pursue other interests are marginalized. Lazar and Lazar (2004) contend that George W. Bush's hegemonic rhetoric has done much to alienate and distance the United States from the world community:

> The broadening of the "war on terror" to include Saddam Hussein, for example, has received mixed international reaction. The French stance is a case in point here, but also relevant are the massive outcries from protesters worldwide, anti-war petitions and demonstrations. Ironically, the broad strokes with which the Bush administration has painted its enemies as "terrorists" are now used by anti-war protesters in their descriptions of America and President Bush. (p. 239)

Lazar and Lazar offer an important perspective to Bush's rhetoric: his rhetorical insensitivity has done much to alienate friends and allies and has, in some instances, created factions that actively work to undermine U.S. foreign policy interests. In this way, Bush is not particularly rhetorically sensitive, in the sense that he has difficulty bridging differences and forming alliances. In his *State of the Union Address* (2002a), Bush defines U.S. national security concerns and presents possible solutions to the problems before his administration, but by off-handedly dismissing those nations who disagree with his policies, Bush alienates world community members, whose cooperation is important to his "war on terror."

One may argue that domestic speeches are constructed specifically for constituents at home and may, therefore, ignore the concerns of the world community; yet in several speeches to the world community, Bush arrogantly and bluntly seeks to compel the global community to bend to American interests. In the following example,

George W. Bush (2002b) speaks to the United Nations General Assembly and authoritatively defines that body as a creation of the United States and therefore subservient to American foreign policy interests:

> All the world now faces a test, and the United Nations a difficult and defining moment. Are Security Council resolutions to be honored and enforced, or cast aside without consequence? Will the United Nations serve the purpose of its founding, or will it be irrelevant? The United States helped found the United Nations. We want the United Nations to be effective, and respectful, and successful. We want the resolutions of the world's most important multilateral body to be enforced. And right now those resolutions are being unilaterally subverted by the Iraqi regime. (n.p.)

Bush's speech here again exposes the issue of universal audience—his strategy is crafted to persuade a domestic audience rather than his international audience. Bush may have sensed, perhaps mistakenly, that the military might of the United States was substantial enough to disregard potential alliances with world leaders. This statement better persuades a domestic audience to support his policies, yet Bush may have recognized that achieving domestic support for his war on terror was most important. In this way, Bush neglects the alliance, forming potential of rhetorical diplomacy and focuses on persuading his domestic constituency that the United Nations is too ineffective to entrust the security of the United States. As he undermines the legitimacy of the institution of the United Nations, Bush is rhetorically insensitive in his speech to his international audience—if that is the audience for whom he crafted this speech. This speech exemplifies how a president may use an international podium to persuade his domestic audience, even if that means alienating those to whom he immediately speaks.

Bush is not subtle in his criticism of the United Nations' reluctance to authorize military action against Iraq. No credence is given to those UN members who have, as evidence subsequently revealed, legitimate concerns about Bush's assertion that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction. Furthermore, beyond legitimate military actions, the world community resists being bullied and strong armed by a member state, for those who are defined as dominating, hegemonic, and imperialist lose their credibility and elevate the perception that they are beneficial partners for the world community (K. K. Campbell & Jamieson, 2008; Greenstein, 2009; Hook & Spanier, 2010). Hook and Spanier (2010) contend that all nations wish to preserve their sovereignty and maintain international respect, and the United States became unpopular when Bush seemed to seek too much power in the world community: "Instead of eliciting goodwill toward Washington, the prospect of world domination by any single government, whatever its declared motives or intentions, troubled large and small countries alike" (p. 320). Herein lies the conundrum of propagating global democracies: while democratic values defend universal human rights, nations who militarily force nations to bend to their will, even in the name of democracy, do therefore contradict their constitutive ethos. In the global arena, virtuous nations are defined as cosmopolitan, cooperative, and collaborative. Bush's speech to the UN upsets this balance of respect and discursive global interaction by brusquely brushing aside the complaints and opinions of the world body of which his nation is a member.

Concluding his remarks to the United Nations, George W. Bush (2002b) asserts that the United States has the right to act unilaterally to preserve its national security interests:

> We must choose between a world of fear and a world of progress. We cannot stand by and do nothing while dangers gather. We must stand up for our security, and for the permanent rights and the hopes of mankind. By heritage and by choice, the United States of America will make that stand. And, delegates to the United Nations, you have the power to make that stand, as well. (n.p.)

Bush's statement presents an impossible dilemma for world leaders who may not wish to militarily support U.S. foreign interests, but Bush maintains that to preserve U.S. national security there is no acceptable alternative to a military response. Furthermore, Bush alienates those who desire nonviolent forms of engagement with Iraq and who wish to apply measures that avoid military engagement. Because his unilateralist rhetoric dismisses differing arguments against military intervention, Bush inadvertently creates significant world opposition to his pre-emptive strike against Iraq. Thus, by asserting that U.S. enemies are those who disagree with a U.S. preemptive war against Iraq, he provokes more moderate and neutral states to choose a side in Bush's war on terror. Hook and Spanier (2010) reveal how unpopular Bush's plan had become, just oneyear after this UN address and one month prior to the Iraq invasion:

> Massive antiwar rallies were held across Europe on February 15 [2003], a peculiar spectacle given that war had not yet broken out. Nearly one million protesters turned out in London, while 600,000 filled the streets of Rome and 500,000 rallied in Berlin. A central concern of would be-allies was that their own citizens would rise up if their governments supported preventive war against Iraq. (p. 306)

Bush's speech (2002b) failed to construct a message to the world community that fostered a sense of inclusiveness and cooperation. As the rhetoric of Barack Obama shall reveal in Chapter 5, *how* and *what* a president communicates is important for its reception among diverse international audiences. If a president seems arrogant and disrespectful of national sovereignty, his message will be poorly received. Secondly, telling a world body, whose governing philosophy seeks inclusion and cooperation, to essentially cater to the wishes of one member-state undermines the credibility of even the most legitimate of concerns. Bush's rhetoric signals that his strategy was attuned to his domestic constituency, and it did not matter if the international community supported his policy. In the Bush administration's cynical assessment of the UN, domestic support for his war efforts was more critical than what multilateral cooperation could offer.

George W. Bush's rhetoric creates a dualistic world where good and evil fight for control of humanity, where Bush's policies may not be questioned because they are pure and godly. Murphy (2003) explains how Bush's rhetoric creates a polarity of good and evil the world community:

> President Bush fills that world with heroes and villains, offering as evidence the things we have seen and the people we have watched. The people and the president who has sketched them, in turn, embody the qualities we should possess and the faith we should carry as we move forward to do God's will—which is the president's policy. (p. 626)

President Bush, in his role as chief interpreter of U.S. official identity, asserts that the United States is uniquely able to defend humanity because the United States represents liberty's purest form. Bush's rhetoric propels the United States to engage in an endless apocalyptic struggle of good and evil, where lines are drawn and no middle ground is

offered to the world community. Murphy's analysis reveals how Bush's rhetoric creates a perception that he is infallible. Thus, Bush's rhetoric divides the world into camps of those who support Bush's U.S. foreign policy as 'good' and those who do not as 'evil.' In a biblical sense, only evildoers would disagree with those who are the emissaries of freedom, for those who are good are guided by a similar design to rid the world of evil.

Acting as the primary author of foreign and domestic policy initiatives, those who share power at home and abroad become somewhat dependent upon the president. That dependence thus gives the president considerable power (Neustadt, 1960). However, a president must become aware of an important caveat when considering his rhetorical advantage: "He can only capture the advantage as he meets the need" (Neustadt, p. 185). Dryzek (2006) reveals the constraints imposed upon the international executive: "The structure of a discursive field constrains the positions that can be taken by actors, but is itself reproduced by subsequent actions and interactions" (p. 106). Bush seems to dismiss the constraints of the discursive field as he speaks and acts in ways that disagree with his international audience. This explanation of discursive interaction reveals why President Bush's unilateral decision to invade Iraq and ignore the protests of many members of the United Nations undermined the leadership of the American presidency abroad, for U.S. leadership is through the perception that it promotes tolerance and democracy. George W. Bush's rhetoric eliminates the need to consult the world community, because the United States is the supreme agent of the world order. Noorani (2005) further explains these elements of Bush's rhetoric:

> Judged by its own standards, the rhetoric of security is counterproductive. It increases fear while claiming that the goal is to eliminate fear. It increases insecurity by pronouncing ever broader areas of life to be in need of security. It increases political antagonism by justifying U.S. interests in a language of universalism. It increases enmity toward the United States by according the United States a special status over and above all other nations. The war against terror itself is a notional war that has no existence except as an umbrella term for various military and police actions. (p. 37)

Noorani here exposes how Bush's rhetoric further destabilizes U.S. foreign relations with world communities by eliminating any areas where U.S. actions may be questioned or regulated by the world community. According to Bush's rhetoric, the United States is elevated to the status as supreme defender of the world community, and as supreme agent of the world order, Bush has the prerogative to unilaterally protect the group he represents. Noorani's examination of George W. Bush's security rhetoric explains how the world community's resentment of the United States first developed. Dryzek (2006) again asserts that "the US-led invasion of Iraq was a setback for the cosmopolitan project because it undermined the liberal multilateralism on which cosmopolitanism is founded" (p. 103). Although George W. Bush ostensibly desired greater democratic freedoms in the world community, he failed to take advantage of the potential of rhetorical diplomacy in his decision not to pursue alliances important for pressuring states who resisted Bush's policies. Bush's rhetorical diplomacy also failed to sustain the Kairotic inertia following the outpouring of international sympathy in response to the 9/11 attacks. Choosing military action over rhetorical diplomacy, Bush failed to recognize the *kairos*, his opportune moment, to use his alliances to nonviolently pressure resistant leaders to adopt U.S. policy, particularly Iraq.

## Bush Foreign Policy: The War on Terror

A key result of the 9/11 attacks was a return to the powerful executive leadership which was once a hallmark of the Cold War presidents. Lind and Thomas (2007) explain, "Not only did George W. Bush become a war president overnight, but the direction of his administration and the balance of power in Washington, D.C., shifted sharply" (p. 129). By many accounts, Bush expanded executive privilege and exercised greater control and authority over Congress as 'wartime' issues began to enlarge the purview of the Pentagon. While Clinton experienced pushback from Congress, which tried to reign in presidential power, Bush capitalized on public support for his military actions abroad; and Congress responded by ceding greater executive power to the president. Wiarda (2006) explains that until the 9/11 attacks, rogue state policy had not "sufficiently stirred the public imagination, secured the necessary congressional budget support, or demonstrated the staying power sufficient to replace 'containment' as the focal point of U.S. foreign policy" (p. 30). Clinton's rhetorical diplomacy sought to put U.S. power in service to a multilateral world community as a way to forge alliances necessary to protect U.S. international trade. However, Clinton's multilateral rhetoric did not locate those existential threats necessary to legitimize expanding the authority of the Executive Branch. Daalder and Lindsay (2003) explain, "In providing Bush with a motive to act abroad, September 11 also gave him the opportunity to act without fear of being challenged at home" (p. 121). Armed with evidence of new threats to U.S. national security, Congress allowed Bush to embolden his position as 'unitary executive' and pursue his agenda abroad.

Underpinning the Bush Doctrine was a sense that U.S. interests were not sufficiently elevated in a post-Cold War world whose prosperity and security had been underwritten by decades of U.S. leadership. Kolodziej and Kanet (2008) explain, "American-Western hegemony was reaffirmed and reinforced by victory in the cold war, but broad Western objectives were not thereby sufficiently realized, particularly from the perspective of the Bush administration, to make the international system operate properly" (p. 33). Bush and most neoconservative thinkers did not view diplomacy as a viable alternative to the Cold War containment polices, which positioned the United States to lead and influence the world community, and they resisted compromising with other states and peoples.

Bush signaled a departure from rhetorical diplomacy as he did not seek to persuade nations through his demonstration of ethos but, rather, sought to compel nations to allies with his war on terror out of either obligation or threats—little effort was made to elicit the goodwill of the world community as a whole. Because the rhetorical power of the presidency relies on consensus-building, a president who considers consensus with low esteem will disregard rhetorical diplomacy as futile. Western (2006) explains, "The Bush administration's view of the world and of its responsibilities for ensuring American and international security rest on a profound faith in the efficacy of force" (p. 106). While the use of force may have been acceptable in the Cold War era, when U.S. military engagement was viewed sometimes as necessary for international security against Soviet threats, Bush's war on terror was viewed critically by many nations as a thinly-veiled attempt to seize power (Peleg, 2009). Finally, Bush's war on terror policies were

formulated with an insistence that U.S. interests would come first before any other nation's interests. Peleg (2009) argues, "Above all, the Bush Doctrine reflected the desire of the president, his assistants, and supporters outside the administration to use military force heavily to emphasize the *dominance* of the United States and international affairs" (p. 41). Formulating policy in this way contravened the decade-long attempt to extend U.S. leadership through consensus building with the international community. Formulating a policy without recognizing this constraint served the sense that U.S. support for international institutions would be inconsistent at best, and at worst, the United States would disregard the interests of the many in deference to its own advantage.

Although Bush did defy much of the world community in his war on terror policy, in some instances he did seek multilateral support for his military engagements. Mingst (2006) reports that during the Bush administration's undertaking to overthrow the Taliban in Afghanistan, "the UN was involved from the outset, both providing multilateral approval and conducting operational activities" (p. 129). In this particular case, Peleg (2009) and other scholars overlook the instances, however few in number, where the Bush administration found broad support from the world community for his war on terror. Keating (2014) argues Bush's view of unilateral action:

> If a materially preponderant state wishes to change an existing international norm, it can more freely choose to ignore the complaints of the other members of international society and go it alone, with the hope that the other members who did not initially agree will eventually want to join the new status quo. (p. 13)

Keating reveals here that Bush's strategy may have dismissed some international institutions, yet his strategy was not without some merit. Bush rhetorical diplomacy sought to draw the world community into the war on terror through repeated displays of U.S. benevolence versus the cruelty of the enemies of democracy. Even though Bush's candor may have incited some hostility from the world, he had a reasonable expectation that previous demonstrations of goodwill (World War II and Cold War) should have increased the likelihood of international support for his foreign policy.

The Bush Doctrine viewed the war on terrorism in ways that hearkened back to bygone Cold War strategies. Kolodziej and Kanet (2008) explain, "The Bush Doctrine and the war on terror project a global reach that justifies the use of American power, undeterred by the sovereignty claims of other states, around the globe," for "the globe is conceived strategically as a single field of action and the object of U.S. control" (p. 6). Here a premise of rhetorical diplomacy finds fault with this strategy: as the United States would react with hostility if a foreign nation executed military missions within its borders, or near its sphere of influence, so too do sovereign nations within the world community. The underpinnings of rhetorical sensitivity are rooted in an understanding of the needs, values, and attitudes of interlocutors; and the construction and implementation of U.S. foreign policy should be conceived through the benefits and goals relative to costs of military interventions. Loss of stature and prestige is a cost which the Bush doctrine viewed as unimportant to its larger mission abroad, yet the goal of stability in the world may not be best achieved through military control of vast geographical areas, especially when the resultant expense of such an endeavor drains U.S. resources away

from domestic concerns. Secondly, the strategy of the war on terror angered allies and portrayed the United States as a sort of bully—this perception was used by U.S. enemies to elicit support for their causes while the greater global community withdrew their support. This had an impact on the efficacy of rhetorical action, for while allies resisted Bush's leadership in the war on terror, they resisted Bush's leadership in other areas of foreign policy. Singh (2012) explains more fully the consequence of this strategy:

> Framing a threat-based global war on terror was dysfunctional diplomatically and invited "blowback," at once elevating terrorism to an unwarranted pre-eminence among America's multiple foreign policy challenges, and widespread anti-Americanism, overemphasizing American exceptionalism and the singularity of U.S. leadership weakened Washington's capacity to persuade other states to responsibly burden-share in policing the fissiparous international order. (p. 45)

Singh's explanation further reveals how a lack of rhetorical sensitivity robs a president of the ability to capitalize on opportunities, those kairotic moments which afford the president to most effectively use U.S. alliances in order to press a resistant regime to adopt U.S. policy. Although Bush sought to persuade the world community that the United States was not acting solely for its own sake but for the defense of its allies and, more broadly, "innocents," a series of aggressive speeches that defended Bush policies caused the world community to react with skepticism and anger. Unwilling to capitulate to world opinion or to negotiate the formulation of his policies, Bush's unilateral prosecution of the war on terror became an increasingly expensive adventure —costing the United States prestige, treasure, and the blood its soldiers.

**Analysis: Secretary of State Colin Powell "It's Time to Turn the Tables on Burma's Thugs" *Wall Street Journal*—June 12, 2003**

I selected this speech because it clearly articulates the initial position of the Bush administration with Burma. Although Bush made passing remarks on Burma in State of the Union speeches, lumping Burma in the notorious Axis of Evil, little action was taken against Burma in the early years of the Bush presidency. On May 30, 2003, things changed when Aung San Suu Kyi's traveling party was violently ambushed. This attack became a catalyst for sanctions and speeches against the junta.[5] Powell (2003) begins his article by explaining the recent actions of regime against Aung San Suu Kyi:

> On May 30, her motorcade was attacked by thugs, and then the thugs who run the Burmese government placed her under "protective custody." We can take comfort in the fact that she is well. Unfortunately, the larger process that Ambassador Razali and Aung San Suu Kyi have been pursuing—to restore democracy in Burma—is failing despite their good will and sincere efforts. It is time to reassess our policy toward a military dictatorship that has repeatedly attacked democracy and jailed its heroes. (n.p.)

Note Powell's use of "thugs" here to link the persons who attacked Aung San Suu Kyi as part of the regime. Powell's rhetorical strategy here is to demonstrate that a violent thug will not be receptive to the peaceful diplomatic efforts of Razali and Suu Kyi. Here he links the definitional properties of a "thug" to rhetorically position regime actors as violent, irrational, and self-serving; and because the definitional properties of a thug preclude any sort of rational dialogue through diplomacy, other measures must be taken. The regime, who attacked her in the first place, now are protecting her— Powell links

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[5]Please note that were several statements by the Bush administration. I have selected Powell's *Wall Street Journal* Opinion because it is an articulation of the reasoning for enacting the harshest sanctions against Burma that following July.

these two parties together in order reveal the deviousness of the regime, as if this was their plan all along: to put her back into custody. In some ways, Powell becomes a bit paternalistic as he insinuates that the United States should not let the democracy movement do the work by itself.

While Powell may be genuinely outraged at Aung San Suu Kyi's treatment, Congress and the State Department had been actively working to impose more punitive measures against the Burmese regime months before Aung San Suu Kyi's convoy was attacked. Here, Powell (2003) reveals that the SPDC was never a sincere partner working toward a diplomatic solution:

> After the May 30 attack on Aung San Suu Kyi's convoy, we sent U.S. Embassy officers to the scene to gather information. They reported back that the attack was planned in advance. A series of trucks followed her convoy to a remote location, blocked it and then unloaded thugs to swarm with fury over the cars of democracy supporters. The attackers were brutal and organized; the victims were peaceful and defenseless. The explanation by the Burmese military junta of what happened doesn't hold water. The SPDC has not made a credible report of how many people were killed and injured. It was clear to our embassy officers that the members of the junta were responsible for directing and producing this staged riot. (n.p.)

Powell works to substantiate his claims through the report of U.S. officials—Powell's account is, therefore, not his opinion but merely the revelation of facts. Powell makes use of traditional dualities in many foreign policy statements that justify the use of violence by the United States: thugs versus democracy supporters, attackers were brutal and organized versus victims were peaceful and defenseless, and so forth. Here Powell presents the attackers, whom he has evidence to believe were members of the military, as savages who are brutal and uncivilized—the impact of this strategy is further enhanced

by the counterpoint of Aung San Suu Kyi's innocence and defenselessness. With democratic outrage, Powell positions NLD leaders and members needing the protection of the United States against the designs of the savage. J. A. Edwards (2008) explains the prevalence of this strategy, "The image of the savage, especially a modern savage, supplies the drive for the United States to use force to expunge the agent from its symbolic universe" (p. 14). Powell's strategy here is to facilitate reform and to demonize the regime in order to defend policies which seek punishment.

The defender of innocents going to battle against a savage dictator may initially seem like the ideal strategy when considering that the promised reforms did not place—Powell (2003) argues, "The junta—which shamelessly calls itself the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC)—has now refused his [Ambassador Razali's diplomatic] efforts and betrayed its own promises" (n.p.). The junta, losing credibility and legitimacy, has no way out of Powell's assessment other than complete and unconditional surrender. Any SPDC promises hereto may only be discounted; continued negotiation by Aung San Suu Kyi is more indicative of her childlike innocence than any real hope for political reform. This strategy is not necessarily apt in diplomatic situations where forming a relationship with one's interlocutor becomes important. J. A. Edwards (2008) explains, "A president who defines the savage by these acts of aggression only deepens the negativity associated with the adversary" (p. 14). Powell does not give his interlocutor a way out of conflict with the United States, for even if they did attack Suu Kyi, preserving diplomatic ties is necessary to keep opportunities for reconciliation in play. Powell violates a central feature of rhetorical diplomacy: demonizing an opponent

both limits a president's credibility when negotiating with the opponent in the future AND limits an administration's ability to form the alliances necessary to pressure the regime to come to the negotiating table. It is a losing strategy of direct confrontation, and while Powell was certainly able to position U.S. citizens to favor subsequent sanctions, he ultimately prevented the U.S.'s capacity to engage in good faith efforts with the junta to find a political solution.

After listing his request for a full accounting of the events, release of NLD leaders and members, and opening of NLD offices, Powell (2003) speaks to his international audience to make his case for punitive action against the junta:

> The United States already uses our voice and our vote against loans to Burma from the World Bank and other international financial institutions. The State Department reports honestly and frankly on the crimes of the SPDC in our reports on Human Rights, Trafficking in Persons, Drugs, and International Religious Freedom. In all these areas, the junta gets a failing grade. We also speak out frequently and strongly in favor of the National League for Democracy, and against the SPDC. I will press the case in Cambodia next week when I meet with the leaders of Southeast Asia, despite their traditional reticence to confront a member and neighbor of their association, known as ASEAN. (n.p.)

While coercion and threatening is a sort of diplomacy, perhaps less rhetorical in its diplomacy, it depends more on the status and prestige of the United States as the world's sole superpower. Confident that they were on the "right side" of history, the Bush administration did not particularly care whether foreign leaders disliked U.S. policies or his diplomatic style. Powell's statement also overlooks and minimizes the valid reasons for resistance of southeast Asian leaders to U.S. intrusion into the affairs of its sovereign states, and Powell should be rhetorically sensitive to the potential issues associated with

Western intervention in Asia. Powell's statement minimizes this opposition and positions ASEAN as naively enabling the savagery of its member state merely because it reflexively resists U.S. leadership without good reasons for that resistance.

Powell (2003) now moves to list his support for legislation proposed in Congress:

> Mr. McConnell has introduced the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act in the Senate; Reps. Henry Hyde and Tom Lantos have introduced a similar bill in the House. We support the goals and intent of the bills and are working with the sponsors on an appropriate set of new steps. Those who follow this issue will know that our support for legislation is in fact a change in the position of this administration and previous ones as well. Simply put, the attack on Ms. Suu Kyi's convoy and the utter failure of the junta to accept efforts at peaceful change cannot be the last word on the matter. The junta that oppresses democracy inside Burma must find that its actions will not be allowed to stand. (n.p.)

Note that Powell is bent more on punishment than he is on actual reform, and while the reflex for justice may be appropriate in some cases, it often becomes problematic for long-lasting diplomatic measures which seek to bring about reform. Indeed, the punishment of bad state actors may only embolden the more extreme voices of a regime who resist U.S. policies. Charney (2009) explains, "International sanctions strengthened the [Burmese] government's resolve to reshape the external threat to include the West in general" (p. 206). Although Powell's rhetoric is rather brazen, it certainly elevated the visibility of Burma's democratic organizations may have drawn the world community to support their cause. Even though Powell doesn't facilitate alliances with the junta's allies, he does rhetorically align himself with the Burmese democracy actors - this both enhanced U.S. credibility to intrude on Burmese affairs and likely elevated the credibility

of Aung San Suu Kyi as a leader who is supported by the U.S. Powell's rhetorical diplomacy was incomplete in the sense that he neglected the formation of alliances who may pressure a resistant state actor in the future. While Powell indicated earlier that he would speak to ASEAN leaders, there was little rhetorical sensitivity to the needs and values of that association. Rhetorical diplomacy recognizes that one's audience is prepositioned only to accept claims in certain ways, and this is especially true for a rhetor speaking to an audience of another country—even greater rhetorical sensitivity must be exerted in order to avoid making remarks that would be culturally unacceptable.

After listing U.S. administration additions to the Lantos/McConnell legislation, Powell (2003) closes with a final admonishment:

> By attacking Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters, the Burmese junta has finally and definitively rejected the efforts of the outside world to bring Burma back into the international community. Indeed, their refusal of the work of Ambassador Razali and of the rights of Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters could not be clearer. Our response must be equally clear if the thugs who now rule Burma are to understand that their failure to restore democracy will only bring more and more pressure against them and their supporters. (n.p.)

There is a sense of finality built into Secretary of State Powell's assessment of those whom he has defined as 'outside of the international community.' There is nothing more the regime can do to elevate its tarnished image, nothing it can do to rescue itself from the threats by the Bush administration—its only option is to brace themselves for the coming storm of punitive retribution. By defining the regime so completely, Powell has articulated an inherent character of the regime that is corrupt and incapable of change or any sort of sincerity.

This is a poor sort of rhetorical diplomacy because if offers little reason for the junta to reform or to turn back from its mistakes. Rhetorically demonized so completely, the regime's only option is to dig in for the coming punishment and seek the safety of regimes who are likewise in the same position as Burma. However, the sanctions later imposed by the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act (2003) did cause harm to the Burmese economy and position pro-democratic movements as the central authority in Burma who could ask the United States to remove those sanctions. However, Taylor (2010) contests that the import ban caused some inconvenience to the regime, for "it resulted in the closure of more than 60 textile factories in Myanmar, with 60,000-80,000 ordinary Burmese losing their jobs in the immediate aftermath of the 2003 sanctions" (p. 96). While Powell and Congress may have imposed such sanctions in order to compel the junta to come to the bargaining table, their rhetorical diplomacy was poorly constructed: (a) they did not articulate how the regime would be rewarded for such reforms; (b) there was little recognition that the regime's loss of power would likely result in incarceration or worse of regime officials; and (c) there was no recognition how diplomatic engagement could help negotiate an end to the oppression of pro-democratic leaders and members. Powell's strategy seems to insist that the regime would have to come to the United States, for the Bush administration would not stoop or tarnish itself in seeking to engage with such despotic and cruel thugs. Finely tuned rhetorical diplomacy offers solutions to interlocutors that presuppose that the other party may be one day brought back into the good graces of the community. Powell's strategy does little to facilitate reconciliation with the world community—it serves only to create further

distance and animosity between the United States (and by proxy the NLD) and the junta. Thus, unsurprisingly, a bad situation in 2003 became worse toward the end of the Bush administration.

**Distracted From Asia: China Gains the Advantage**

As this dissertation's central social movement, the Burmese Pro-Democracy movement, is located in Asia, I turn here to a brief excursus of Bush's foreign policy as it relates to China. Beyond the subject matter of this dissertation, Asia represents a significant percentage of the world's gross domestic product, as well as a significant percentage of global population. Thus, any discussion of rhetorical diplomacy *must* discuss how a president interacts with Asian leaders.

As Bush was drawn into conflict and in the Middle Eastern conflicts, the Chinese were in the midst of expanding their economic sphere of influence. Brzezinski (2007) explains:

> The Chinese quietly promoted a China-led Asian cooperative community in which the United States would at best play a secondary role, and China and Russia colluded to reduce the military presence in Central Asia that America had developed with its post-9/11 invasion of Afghanistan. (p. 171)

Brzezinski's observation reveals an elemental constraint in rhetorical diplomacy: while a nation concentrates and expends it political and military resources to one area of foreign affairs, significant opportunity costs may be incurred by ignoring other areas of the world which deserve U.S. attention. This is simply due to the fact that no nation has unlimited resources and political capital; and the *overextension* of U.S. power in one area of the world often constitutes the loss of advantage in other areas of the world, as competitors

fill the resultant vacuum of power. Furthermore, foreign policies, which are rooted in the execution of war, necessarily elevate the importance of that military conflict, in the eyes of an administration, and degrade the relative importance of seemingly unimportant foreign affairs.

Bush's neglect of China's increasing sphere of influence in Asia is good cause for criticism, for no other nation in Asia constitutes greater economic and military competition. Brands (2014) explains:

> From this perspective, Beijing's conspicuous effort to maintain good relations with the United States during the Bush years looks less like the product of savvy American diplomacy and more like a shrewd Chinese effort to keep a low profile while building economic, military, and diplomatic influence for the long term. (p. 186)

Brands' observation here is relevant with the recognition that the Chinese have increasingly exerted more military and political control in Asia as a way to secure its economic expansion. Recall that Clinton's globalization policies sought to shape the world economies in ways that would advantage U.S. business interests, and Bush's neglect of that project undermined the cultivation of international commercial interests. As Asia represents a significant, and arguably central position within the world economic system, shortchanging U.S. influence in that region limits a president's rhetorical diplomacy.

In real and obvious ways, Bush administration officials overlooked its diplomatic opportunities in Asia. Paupp (2009) explains at length an example of this neglect:

> Not only has the Bush-II administration failed to make progress on these peace initiatives and peace prospects between India and Pakistan, it has also failed to address the concerns of the Southeast Asian nations as a whole. For example on July 29, 2007, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced that she would be absent from an Asian security forum in Manila that week. In response, China stepped into the great power gap as China's new Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi came to the conference seeking to build ties and trust in the region—at Washington's expense. (p. 84)

Paupp's assessment describes the relevance of rhetorical diplomacy as a way to forge alliances which serve to promote U.S. interests. The absence of administration officials from key Asian summits robbed the Bush administration's capacity to form ASEAN partnerships and ultimately limit U.S. influence in southeast Asia. This perhaps is where the salience of rhetorical diplomacy finds good ground: the executive branch must work to extend leadership to areas of the international economy critical to U.S. economic, security, and political interest. Rhetorical diplomacy requires executive leadership in matters that may be of significant importance to the United States, not just in the immediate present but in the future. Failing to sustain and build alliances has deleterious consequences when rhetorical opportunities (*kairos*) arise which provide an opening for U.S. influence with resistant regimes.

Filling the vacuum of U.S. influence, Chinese delegations increasingly sought to solidify their relations with southeast Asian nations who had previously viewed Chinese leadership with skepticism. Kolodziej and Kanet (2008) explain the connection between Bush's aggressive foreign policy and the rise of Chinese influence in Southeast Asia:

> Beijing feels that the U.S. strategic advantage in the region could be inimical to China's economic and security interests at times of crisis. In response to this challenge, China has launched an impressive charm offensive in Southeast Asia.

> The immediate goal is to strategically reassure Southeast Asia that China's rise does not pose a threat to the region. (p. 60)

Pressing their advantage, recent Chinese diplomatic relations point to the very real benefit of forming political associations with which they may obtain significant trade concessions. Concurrent with the economic growth of China's economy has been the growth of the Chinese military, and although China's military expenditure is by no means close to that of the United States, its ability to project power within the Asia Pacific region is significant. Dunne and Schmidt (2008) complain, "A costly military intervention followed by a lengthy occupation in the Middle East has weakened the USA's ability to contain the rising threat from China," thus "the Bush Presidency has not exercised power in a responsible and sensible manner." (p. 104). While the Chinese have rarely used their military forces to press their advantage, the impacts of Bush's neglect of Asia may have severe consequences for years to come.

As U.S. leadership perhaps shapes how nations interact with each other, Bush's policies served to reduce the acceptance of nonviolent methods of foreign relations. Chang (2011) explains:

> This thus sets a bad example for any rising power (notably China) that as long as you are a powerful country, you can do whatever you want regardless of international law and legitimacy and impose your standards upon others by force. (p. 161)

Indeed, the Chinese have already tried to press their claims against Japan in the Senkaku Islands with limited success, but they have revealed a willingness to use the threat of military force to achieve their goals.

Finally, in a region where democratic governments have had a troubled past, The Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, and so forth, Bush's foreign policies did little to elevate the reputation of democracy. McFaul (2010) explains, "The use of military force in the name of freedom's advance has not only produced limited results for democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq, but tainted all efforts—especially American efforts—to promote democracy around the world" (p. 233). As latter chapters of this dissertation will reveal, the Burmese democracy movements desperately depended on their reputation as a viable and form of government. While U.S. military adventures may have been unpopular with many in the world community, it certainly demonstrated to junta leaders that the U.S. was capable of intervening when and where it desired. This recognition may have elevated Aung San Suu Kyi's status through her affiliation with a powerful and militarily superior ally.

**President Bush Addresses the United Nations General Assembly—**
**The United Nations Headquarters—September 25, 2007**

Spoken before a world body of leaders, President Bush (2007b) presents his case for intervention as part of United Nation Declaration of Human Rights. By 2007, his presidency had been mired in two costly wars and his history of caustic rhetoric predisposed his international audience against him. The timing of Bush's speech is particularly relevant here, for even as Bush rises to the podium to make his case before the United Nations, hundreds of thousands of monks were protesting Yangon. Although the Bush administration imposed harsh sanctions in 2003, much of his focus remained within Middle Eastern affairs. It is likely, therefore, that the vivid images smuggled out

of Burma of monks protesting in the streets of Yangon had an impact on the content of Bush's speech; but Bush failed to take advantage of the *kairos*, the opportune moment to pressure the regime to reform. Of note was also an accompanying fact sheet with the speech about Burma, published online and submitted to the United Nations forum with the speech.

I selected this speech because the excerpt about Burma was relayed on BBC, RFA, and certainly the VOA-Burma. On October 3, 2007, about a week after Bush's speech, VOA Burmese Service Chief Than Lwin Htun (2007) testified before the Congressional Human Rights Caucus about VOA's commitment to telling the Burmese people world sympathy for their plight:

> At the grass roots level, although the events in Burma were so ugly, they generated tremendous international attention and sympathy. The whole world was shocked by the violence. Fortunately, the world's media was able to effectively communicate this sympathy and solidarity to the people of Burma. Not only international broadcasters but also famous newspapers, internet blogs, celebrities, religious leaders and millions of ordinary people around the world found ways to reach out and touch the people of Burma last week. (n.p.)

It is noteworthy also that the Bush administration dramatically increased VOA and RFA funding during this period, perhaps as a way to solidify its alliance with the Burmese Pro-democracy movement, yet greater attention needed to be focused on Burma's key ally ASEAN. Neglecting to rhetorically create an alliance with ASEAN limited the scope of Bush's rhetorical diplomacy at the opportune moment (*kairos*) of the Saffron Revolution. Note that because the purpose here is to rhetorically analyze the Burma elements of Bush's speech, I'll refrain from an analysis of his entire address. Bush (2007a) begins by linking his propositions to the values of the UN:

> Sixty years ago, representatives from 16 nations gathered to begin deliberations on a new international bill of rights. The document they produced is called the Universal Declaration of Human Rights [UDHR]—and it stands as a landmark achievement in the history of human liberty. It opens by recognizing "the inherent dignity" and the "equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family" as "the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world." And as we gather for this 62nd General Assembly, the standards of the Declaration must guide our work in this world. (n.p.)

Bush's strategy here is to first demonstrate that the values of his administration agree with the values of the United Nations—this will serve to legitimize his arguments. This first part of the speech epideictically praises the values and history of the United Nations in order to elevate his credibility among the foreign leaders. It is important to note that, by this time, Bush was increasingly interested in multilateral cooperation. Peleg (2009) explains, "Interestingly, foreign policy of the Bush ministration began to change toward the end of the administration's tenure in office," and "the closer to the finish line, the more consultative, cooperationist, and multilateral the administration became" (p. 127). Perhaps toward the end of his administration, Bush realized unilateral action was too costly to U.S. financial and political power. In his speech, Bush directs his audience to consider that the UDHR is the underpinning value which should motivate their decisions. In Bush's terminology, the UDHR is an achievement worthy of their respect, and in linking the past actions of previous UN bodies, Bush endeavors to predispose the present actions of those who sit before him.

Bush's (2007a) rhetorical turn now is to illuminate how the world body may continue the tradition of human rights defense:

> Achieving the promise of the Declaration requires confronting long-term threats; it also requires answering the immediate needs of today. The nations in this

> chamber have our differences, yet there are some areas where we can all agree. When innocent people are trapped in a life of murder and fear, the Declaration is not being upheld. When millions of children starve to death or perish from a mosquito bite, we're not doing our duty in the world. When whole societies are cut off from the prosperity of the global economy, we're all worse off. Changing these underlying conditions is what the Declaration calls the work of "larger freedom"—and it must be the work of every nation in this assembly. (n.p.)

Notice the cause-and-effect relationship that Bush creates in his speech. His strategy here is to persuade his audience to agree with the notion that when the few suffer, the many are hurt, as well. Violations of human rights are then constituted as a threat to human civilization as a whole—he implies that humanitarian intervention is justified because it thwarts long-term threats to the many. Bush's strategy here is to demonstrate the common linkages that exist universally with his audience, and to that end he offers up the innocent, the children, and isolated societies. Perhaps these offerings may universally appeal to world leaders, yet it implicitly ignores the sense that few nations will commit resources to solve the problems of others. Bush therefore needs to demonstrate how the deprivation of the few constitutes a threat to the many.

Bush (2007a) now completes positioning his speech as agreeable with the underlying values of the world body:

> First, the mission of the United Nations requires liberating people from tyranny and violence. The first article of the Universal Declaration begins, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." The truth is denied by terrorists and extremists who kill the innocent with the aim of imposing their hateful vision on humanity. The followers of this violent ideology are a threat to civilized people everywhere. All civilized nations must work together to stop them—by sharing intelligence about their networks, and choking off their finances, and bringing to justice their operatives. (n.p.)

As in the Powell speech, Bush's presentation of the duality of savagery and civilization are used to marginalize those who disagree with his ideas and facilitate cooperation among those who consider themselves as "civilized." Bush uses the vocabulary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: innocent, justice, and civilized people. Bush makes his argument, not on the basis of defending the innocent, but on the basis that to defend the innocent, civilized nations must act. The impetus is thus not just a moral one, but is also rooted in the strategy of removing existential threats to the civilized world.

Bush's request for multilateral cooperation is not the underlying request here—implicit in his speech is that, while the United States will continue to make unilateral decisions, he asks his audience to back U.S. foreign policy. This is not a sea-change in Bush Doctrine, yet it is far from the caustic demand for assistance that he had made on many other occasions. Here, Bush asks world leaders to assist him, not because of the elite status of the United States, but because his requests are rooted in shared interests and values of a civilized community of nations who face threats from savage extremists. As in the case of Powell's rhetoric, whether Bush's assessment of this threat is reflective of the true state of affairs in the world, his strategy actually prevents engagement with his enemies. There is no way other than 'the fight' for Bush—those who think otherwise are deluding themselves: a savage will always act savagely. Using this terminology endeavors to convince his audience that these enemies are somehow inhuman, entities who contest the values of the civilized world, terrorists who are un-teachable, un-persuadable, and un-reasonable.

Bush (2007a) now moves to position ideal nations who chose democracy and the defense of human rights as examples of success:

> In the long run, the best way to defeat extremists is to defeat their dark ideology with a more hopeful vision—the vision of liberty that founded this body. The United States salutes the nations that have recently taken strides toward liberty—including Ukraine and Georgia and Kyrgyzstan and Mauritania and Liberia, Sierra Leone and Morocco. The Palestinian Territories have moderate leaders, mainstream leaders that are working to build free institutions that fight terror, and enforce the law, and respond to the needs of their people. The international community must support these leaders, so that we can advance the vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and security. (n.p.)

Bush's strategy here is to elevate his proposition that a more hopeful vision ultimately facilitates the empowerment of 'mainstream' and moderate leaders.[6] Implicit in Bush's argument here is the vision of liberty conceived by the United Nations. Perhaps Bush recognizes his previous rhetorical failings and endeavors here to promote, at least in his appraisal, the vision of liberty of the United Nations. Indeed, Bush's use of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is apt here, for perhaps aware of his lack of credibility, he anticipates rejection of any promotion of the United States as preceptor of world values and offers up previously agreed upon treaties in which to elevate the ethos of his argument. Finally, while achieving peace between Israel and Palestine may be the ultimate political achievement for any sitting president, it seems to be an outlier and unnecessarily loaded distraction in his speech—especially when considering his recent actions in the Muslim world. However, because of U.S. broad-based support for Israel, perhaps referring to this issue points more to the political sensibilities of his pro-Israel

[6]Perhaps in the moment of this speech, all these nations were good examples of how reforms were instituted, but certainly Bush's assessment would not hold true for Ukraine and Palestine.

domestic constituency rather than Bush's rhetorical insensitivity toward his international audience.

Bush (2007a) now calls his audience to act against nations who have violated UHDR:

> Every civilized nation also has a responsibility to stand up for the people suffering under dictatorship. In Belarus, North Korea, Syria, and Iran, brutal regimes deny their people the fundamental rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration. Americans are outraged by the situation in Burma, where a military junta has imposed a 19-year reign of fear. (n.p.)

While 'stand up' could mean lots of things, the dichotomy of civilization versus savage rhetorically positions the United States to persuade his audience to defend those who are oppressed by their regimes. By first indicating the length of time the regime has oppressed its people, Bush reveals to his audience an intolerable span of time which elevates the legitimacy of acting immediately. The inference here is that too much time has passed to justify further patience with the regime. This strategy is prudent because many in ASEAN justified their resistance to U.S. intrusion by arguing that incremental reforms were more likely to succeed than a complete overhaul within a shorter timeframe. Bush (2007a) then hierarchically orders the violations of the regime in descending order of universally held values by the audience: "Basic freedoms of speech, assembly, and worship are severely restricted" (n.p.). Listing these violations first in this order is noteworthy because it follows the rhetorical pattern set by the Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): "Human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people" (n.p.). Bush's strategy, therefore, draws upon the

UDHR in order position his call to action, for while the members of the world body have all agreed to observe human rights, they must then act against those who violate the UDHR. Bush (2007a) then specifies further the atrocities committed by regime as a way to elicit sympathy for the Burmese people as a way to draw credibility for his call to action: "Ethnic minorities are persecuted," and "forced child labor, human trafficking, and rape are common" (n.p.). This list further reinforces the savage versus civilization image—acting against the regime means acting in defense of innocents who suffer the brutality of those who are uncivilized. Bush's logic is simple: a 19-year history only further substantiates the claim that character of those who hold power in regime is inherently flawed—if they were capable of honorable conduct, they would have reformed already. Bush (2007a) concludes his list by offering evidence of those whom the regime has oppressed: "The regime is holding more than 1,000 political prisoners—including Aung San Suu Kyi, whose party was elected overwhelmingly by the Burmese people in 1990" (n.p.). Aung San Suu Kyi completes his list of those whom the regime has oppressed. By this time, she had slowly risen to fame and notoriety for her continued quiet and determined resilience. Bush offers her as the rightful elected leader of the Burmese people and the antithesis of the savagery of the SDPC.

It is likely that some members of his audience were guilty of holding political prisoners and of similar crimes, but alienation of these parties is actually a prudent rhetorical strategy—Bush needs only to convince those parties who are capable of joining him in sanctioning the junta:

> The ruling junta remains unyielding, yet the people's desire for freedom is unmistakable. This morning, I'm announcing a series of steps to help bring peaceful change to Burma. The United States will tighten economic sanctions on the leaders of the regime and their financial backers. We will impose an expanded visa ban on those responsible for the most egregious violations of human rights, as well as their family members. We'll continue to support the efforts of humanitarian groups working to alleviate suffering in Burma. And I urge the United Nations and all nations to use their diplomatic and economic leverage to help the Burmese people reclaim their freedom. (n.p.)

The imposition of sanctions is only effective with broad support of economically powerful nations whose corporations invest in foreign companies and countries. Bush calls on the symbolic value of the United States in order to pressure UN leaders to act against the regime. Noteworthy in Bush's speech is the absence of long-used terms 'thug,''criminal,''gangster,' which he and his administration used often to describe the enemies of the United States. I do not believe the absence of caustic rhetoric is merely due to Bush's rhetorical sensitivity for his audience, for Bush used caustic rhetoric before the UN General Assembly in previous speeches. Bush's restraint may substantiate Peleg's (2009) argument that Bush was more conciliatory toward the end of his tenure in office. Bush is more courteous and demonstrates the political sensitivity of a seasoned statesman.

Bush's request is certainly not as extravagant, which asked the world community to join the United States in its military adventures. The sanctions he proposes are fairly easy for leading economies to implement. More dubious is the obvious turnaround in Bush's assessment of the efficacy of nonmilitary action— 'peaceful change' is perhaps a too lofty goal to compel the junta to reform. A more likely and easier goal is to use sanctions as a way to force the junta to the negotiating table, yet that project relies on the

willingness of the administration to engage the junta. A rhetorical diplomacy which creates alliances to pressure the Burmese regime is incomplete without engaging the regime and capitalizing on pressure it has created with other nations: engagement is the final step in rhetorical diplomacy. However, Bush does demonstrate in this speech an evolved rhetorical diplomacy which recognizes that alliances with the world community are necessary for pressing a regime to reform. While it may have come at the end of his presidency, Bush's speech is a rhetorically savvy as it locates the central human rights values of his audience as a way to form those alliances with world leaders who support the Burmese regime in some capacity.

## Conclusion

Under Bush's leadership, U.S. capacity to form alliances evaporated throughout the world when the United States needed international cooperation to operate bases or to conduct military operations in nations of strategic importance. In addition to a loss of a more expansive military coalition, the drop in international approval directly contributed to the capacity of the United States to rhetorically influence enemies *and* allies alike. Bush's caustic rhetoric and coercive violence tarnished ethos of U.S. world leadership.

In 2007, it should have been unclear how further sanctions, which did not facilitate change within Burma hitherto, would compel resistant regime leaders to reform. Further evidence of this failure would come in the weeks and months after threats of further sanctions, as the junta brutally suppressed hundreds of thousands of protesting monks, monks who were protesting at the very moment of Bush's (2007a) speech to the United Nations. Indeed, in his UN speech, Bush announced new sanctions

against the regime, yet he failed to form the necessary alliances with those who sustained economic trade with the regime, namely ASEAN. It is fairly certain that junta leaders heard Bush's speech, and they certainly were not ignorant of his track record of carrying through on his promises of military intervention. However, in the weeks following Bush's speech, regime leaders proceeded in committing greater atrocities against their people than those Bush had listed in his UN speech. As Bush's tenure came to a close, his successor was left with the prestige of the United States diminished and encountered a world community increasingly hostile to U.S. leadership. While Bush's rhetorical actions certainly played a part in compelling the junta to reform during the Obama administration, it would take Obama's sense that pragmatic engagement completed the rhetorical turn of sanctions. Throughout his 8-year term, Bush failed to capitalize on the Saffron Revolution and Cyclone Nargis, events imbued with *kairos*, and could not pressure the regime to improve its human rights record. Instead, Bush followed the same rhetorical strategy which had limited success in building the necessary alliances for an effectual rhetorical diplomacy.

It is, however, the case that presidents have a lasting impact on the presidency. Although it is impossible to know the interior thoughts of Burma's junta officials, Obama's presidency may have benefitted in some ways by the demonstration of U.S. military force by the Bush Administration in Iraq and Afghanistan. Perhaps the junta were more willing to come to bargaining table after they were repeatedly chastened by Bush administration officials. Obama may have thus benefitted by juxtaposing his engagement style with that of the George W. Bush administration, for while presidents

create the presidency, the Bush administration will have left a lasting impact on subsequent administrations for years to come.

A president's ability to speak on numerous occasions on a particular issue is a significant power that should not underestimated: few political leaders are given a platform from which to elicit international attention as the President of the United States. However, a president's ability to speak throughout the world is predicated on the perceived favor and prestige of the United States. Forming alliances is central to a president's rhetorical diplomacy and serves to extend U.S. leadership in foreign affairs. Brands (2014) reports, "From the outset, critics warned that a declared policy of perpetual hegemony might elicit the very international resistance it was meant to avoid," yet "top administration officials insisted that U.S. power would be viewed as largely benevolent, or at least benign, in nature" (pp. 155-156). The Bush administration's rhetorical miscalculation endangered the long-standing alliances between the United States and key European allies. Tourreille and Vallet (2006) explain, "European public opinion shifted sharply in response to the second Gulf War," and "by 2003, the perception of the United States in Europe was sharply negative, the editorials had grown trenchant again, and pundits were again predicting the demise of the transatlantic relationship" (p. 141). Unfortunately, the Bush administration ignored the decline in world opinion and pressed ahead with the unilateral formation of its policies. Ruggie (2006) argues, "Neoconservative pundits like William Kristol and Robert Kagan are among the most vocal advocates of democracy promotion abroad," yet "in their vigorous advocacy of and support for the Iraq War, they expressed little more than contempt for

public opinion abroad, not appreciating the indivisible link between the two" (p. 43). The contrast to the rhetorical diplomacy of George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton was startlingly apparent, as the world community was shocked by the abandonment of once cultivated relationships.

International credibility serves rhetorical diplomacy as it facilitates the perception that aligning with U.S. leadership is mutually beneficial. However, a leader in a globalized world retains that rhetorical position in the pull of what that nation may do *for* the world community; yet the fear of what a nation may do *to* the world community limits that rhetorical attraction as nations seek to limit the power of those they perceive as hegemonic. Brzezinski (2007) reveals, "Respect for American statesmanship has plunged precipitously, while America's capacity to lead has been gravely damaged" (p. 148). While the Bush administration was certainly not negative in all respects, rhetorical diplomacy is rooted in the sense that the power of a country must remain benevolent in order to lead.

# CHAPTER 5

## The Rhetorical Diplomacy of Barack Obama: An Analysis of Nobel Prize and Burma Speeches

As the final term of the Bush administration drew to a close, the impact of the Bush Doctrine was clear: U.S. popularity had significantly diminished among traditional friends and allies; and some nations, such as Turkey, exhibited signs of becoming hostile to the United States (see Table 1). Upon his election to executive office, Barack Obama faced daunting challenges from the legacy of the Bush administration: rescuing an economy on the verge of complete collapse, regaining the moral high ground in foreign affairs, and eliciting goodwill from the world community. Aristotle (2007) explains how ethos is central to persuasion:

> [There is persuasion] through character whenever the speech is spoken in such a way as to make the speaker worthy of credence; for we believe fair-minded people to a greater extent and more quickly [than we do others], on all subjects in general and completely so in cases where there is not exact knowledge but room for doubt. (p. 38)

Obama's immediate goal following the George W. Bush administration was to demonstrate, through his speeches, that he is fair-minded and is sincerely working for the greater good of the world community. Immediately after his inauguration, Obama embarked on a world tour where he gave speeches that worked to persuade his audience that was worthy of his position as a world leader and was, using Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's (2008) terminology, a reasonable person who could be trusted to engage cooperatively with the world community.

Obama's desire to cooperatively engage with the world community may demonstrate how his rhetorical diplomacy responds significantly to the Bush administration. Hook and Spanier (2010) explain how newly-elected presidents often respond to the previous administration:

> The pendulum swung again in 2008, when voters sought an alternative to the Bush Doctrine, whose emphasis on U.S. primacy and preemptive wars had proven overly provocative and costly to the United States. A majority of voters placed their faith in Barack Obama, who called for an end to the Iraq War, the mistreatment of war prisoners, and the unilateral actions in American foreign policy that frightened the nation's friends and foes alike. (p. 358)

The rhetorical diplomacy of Barack Obama seems to suggest that the president can mold and create constituencies for specific policy actions—in other words, rhetorical diplomacy may be more constitutive than responsive. Charged with the task of changing the course of U.S. foreign policy set by his predecessor, Obama endeavors to create and publicize notable differences between his presidency and that of George W. Bush's. Obama's rhetorical diplomacy presses policy goals which endeavor to increase international cooperation, abolish torture of prisoners, and end the War in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many swings in U.S. foreign policy have occurred because of the sentiments of American voters who were unhappy with previous administrations. The "Report on the National Task Force on the Ethical Responsibilities of Presidential Rhetoric" (Goldzwig, 2008) reveals how presidents must remain consistent and faithful to campaign promises:

> A president must avoid, then, to the greatest extent possible and under the known constraints of our constitutional system, the president should strive to maintain consistency in word and deed, trying to fill in privately and publicly any and all gaps between public promises and public performance. (p. 333)

The rhetorical power of Obama's presidency is, therefore, predicated upon the maintenance of a presidential identity that publicizes differences from the previous administration, while maintaining significant linkages to the communal values of his constituents at home and abroad. Thus, Obama retains his rhetorical power while he remains in opposition to the designs of the Bush administration. For as the George W. Bush administration was unpopular with the world community, Obama must demonstrate how his administration marks a change in U.S. world leadership. Brzezinski (2007) claims:

> The next U.S. president will have to mount a monumental effort to restore America's legitimacy as the major guarantor of global security and re-identify America with a common response to intensifying social dilemmas in a world that is now politically awakened and not susceptible to imperial domination. (p. 177)

United States interests are not served by refusing to diplomatically seek rapprochement with nations with whom we may have considerable differences, for the United States is only able to shape the globalized world if it retains its leadership—that leadership is predicated on the formation of relationships with other nations. Obama's response to the foreign policy style of the Bush administration becomes immediately apparent in the rhetorical analyses of his speeches in this chapter and my rhetorical analysis of his speeches on the Burmese democracy movement.

Obama also reveals a frank pragmatism that addresses how presidents may utilize the power and prestige of the U.S. presidency through a formulation of strategy that acknowledges its position in the milieu of international actors. Coclanis (2012) explains:

> It is out of the question, however, for the US and the EU to have much influence in Myanmar—or to counterbalance China's and, increasingly, India's sway—unless the West engages and incentivizes an often inscrutable regime that at long last, and for whatever reason, seems amenable to positive change. (p. 95).

While China and India and other ASEAN member nations are reluctant to address humanitarian concerns of their neighbors, a president must persuade regime leaders that progress toward democratic reform will be rewarded with significant U.S. investment and tourist income. This new income predominantly stands to benefit the regime and friends of the regime whose financial holdings have positioned regime leaders to reap significant financial rewards. Before Obama's policy shift toward engagement, the junta was preoccupied with the notion that the United States sought regime change or, at worst, sought to invade. Obama's direct engagement situates the democracy movement with removal of sanctions, delivery of aid, and release of frozen junta funds if the regime agrees to the institution of democratic reforms by the junta. Thus, Obama rhetorically addresses the paranoia of regime while shifting the center of gravity of U.S. foreign relations to the democracy movement leadership. World leaders approve this approach, and international public opinion polls reveal that Obama's rhetoric and reforms of U.S. foreign policy have elevated U.S. approval ratings and have created a more positive perception (Brzezinski, 2012).

## The Obama Foreign Policy Shift

Upon his election to executive office, Barack Obama sought to repair the global image of American democratic leadership by eliciting cooperation with international institutions. More than a response to the previous administration, Obama endeavors to

construct a new way of cooperating with the world community through rhetorical diplomacy. United States foreign policy scholars Steven Hook and John Spanier (2010) discuss President Obama's key foreign policy principles:

> These general principles were entirely consistent with the American foreign policy tradition. Wars in a "constitutional" world order would be the rare exception to the rule of peaceful coexistence. Any problems arising with other governments would be resolved by rational discussion and compromise. All states would recognize their mutual interests in a stable interstate system and prosperous world economy, and those interests would motivate nations to cooperate rather than compete on the world stage. Finally, the United States would reclaim its moral leadership and inspire other governments to emulate its political and social systems. In all these respects, the new president quickly adopted the American style of foreign policy that originated more than two centuries earlier. (p. 362)

While the United States remains the world's sole military superpower, Obama seeks greater collaboration with the international community. Redefining the United States as a collaborative partner in the international community may reinvigorate U.S. credibility and thus have a positive effect upon the rhetorical power of the U.S. presidency. Constituted by the values of U.S. democracy and cognizant of the value of cooperative engagement with the global community, Obama endeavors to distance himself from the internationally unpopular presidency of George W. Bush.

Obama's foreign policy certainly addresses similar exigencies of the previous administration, yet Obama argues for new solutions to 21st-century issues of terrorism, nuclear proliferation, climate change, and Middle East tensions (Pranger, 2009). Hook and Spanier (2010) explain how Obama's foreign policy objectives employ new solutions to endemic international issues: "Obama sought to repair a 'foreign policy disconnect' between public preferences and the recent government actions that ignored global

problems, spurned international law, and opted for preemptive and unilateral military action over diplomatic cooperation" (p. 362). Obama developed new solutions through his sense of the international community and how the United States could realistically press that community to adopt its policy. In an effort to reverse many of the abusive features of the Bush administration, Obama moved quickly to impose stringent rules of conduct for U.S. interrogators, closed all secret CIA detention facilities, and promised to close the Guantanamo Bay detention center (Roth, 2010). Obama's foreign policy reflects a desire for collaboration with the world community while maintaining his popularity at home. By successfully mediating between domestic interests and international concerns, Obama retains the powerful advantage of rhetorical diplomacy. Thus, Obama is both constituted by his executive office, and while seeking alternatives to Bush's U.S. foreign policy, Obama redefines rhetorical diplomacy.

The Obama administration sensed that the key issue impeding U.S. leadership in foreign affairs was not U.S. military power but the credibility of U.S. leadership. His administration understood that leadership requires the *willingness* of nations to be led by the United States, for coercive power often serves to unify opposition against a leader who is considered to be overly-aggressive. Singh (2012) explains:

> From the outset of the Obama administration, its foreign policy principals engaged in one of the most concerted efforts at strategic engagement and renewed diplomacy seen by a new U.S. administration, the symbolism of which was especially forceful after the polarizing Bush era. (p. 51)

Obama recognized that bullying in a post-Cold War globalized world community has no place when trade and security depend on mutual cooperation, for good relations with

markets are the bedrock of trade.

Obama's foreign policy shift should not be seen as a departure from previous administrations, but a renewal of the appreciation that differences need not create mistrust and hostility. Childers (2014) states, "Instead of trivializing political difference, Obama has used the Golden Rule to call on a deeper understanding of human mutuality," for "it was this mutuality that allowed Obama to suggest that doubt inherent in faith can be combined with the Golden Rule to find common ground— cooperation and understanding" (p. 45). Recognizing that other human groups have needs, desires, and experiences similar to the United States hearken to pivotal moments in U.S. history, where the recognition of the inherent humanity of disparate ethnicities and cultures came to be appreciated. Although the United States certainly had deep problems with ethnocentrism, the diversity of cultures residing within the United States perhaps may better position U.S. leadership in a world of diverse ethnicities and cultures. Obama's sense also that the Golden Rule (do to others as you would have them do to you) is codified in Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam —the world's major faiths, and this unifying sense of a shared humanity could also serve to ameliorate (not remove) differences enough for diplomacy to work. This is a key feature of rhetorical diplomacy: a president must recognize that his interlocutor has needs and motivations that are commonly shared by all members of the human race. Simply, people need to be included in a president's vision of the universal audience. It is with this understanding that rhetorical diplomacy considers coercion as a last resort and will recognize that reform should be rewarded—that the renunciation of U.S. hostility is not enough to motivate

regimes to reform. Finally, I argue that the Golden Rule is more than a rhetorical device in speeches—it is central to Obama's foreign policy, which is sensitive to the rhetorical constraints of his audience.

Bush left Obama with the incredible task of restoring the U.S.'s tattered reputation in the world community, while maintaining the leadership to shape globalization in ways that benefit U.S. interests (J. A. Edwards, 2014). Peleg (2009) explains further:

> While the United States must desert Bush's unilateralist approach as inherently dangerous, ineffective, and counterproductive, it cannot simply resign as the natural, historical leader of the post-Cold War, post-9/11 world (as some isolationists on the Right or moralists on the Left would have it). (p. 18)

Leadership in a globalized system of nations, whose leaders all seek to protect the interests of their people, must acknowledge that while unilateralism does not work—isolation is no longer an option while our economy and security are diametrically linked to nations outside our borders. While I do view Bush's foreign policy as problematic, voices calling for isolationism and unilateralism have had a historical presence in U.S. society for years. The belief in U.S. exceptionalism has helped facilitate the misconception that the United States has no need of the world and may unilaterally dictate without consequence. Obama recognizes that U.S. global power stems from the goodwill of other nations—ignoring the needs of other nations only elicits hostility from those the United States needs for financial expansion and national security.

## Obama's Foreign Policy of Human Rights

Obama's leadership style in foreign affairs significantly differs from that of his predecessor. The Bush administration refused direct official contact with proclaimed enemies of the United States, while Obama refuses to place preconditions for official diplomatic efforts (Pranger, 2009). Likewise, to aid his diplomatic efforts, Obama seeks close relationships with those who have remained at the periphery of U.S. foreign policy. In a post-Arab Spring Middle East, Obama's desire to limit violent conflict while maintaining human rights principles is particularly problematic— especially as he seeks to create friendly ties with allies who may not adhere completely to human rights principles. While human-rights principles may preclude any notion of dealing with oppressive regimes, Obama tempers his policy with a pragmatic sense of finding workable solutions (Greenstein, 2009). However, Obama's engagement with oppressive regimes such as Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan has maintained U.S. military supply lines into Afghanistan, while raising harsh criticism for his public silence on human rights in those countries (Roth, 2010). Barack Obama eloquently articulates human rights issues in his speeches to international communities, yet critics argue he must translate those speeches into actionable foreign policy initiatives.

While unilateral and coercive actions serve to alienate friends and unify enemies, a commitment to engagement implicitly recognizes that diplomacy is the ideal method of interaction between parties in a globalized system [world]. Obama's willingness to speak and broker with *all* nations is also imbued with the recognition that U.S. hegemony is not a legitimate foreign policy position: the United States must work

with others if it is to retain a leadership role in world affairs. Engagement with nations, even those with human rights violations, offers a president the opportunity to persuade his interlocutor to reform—not through threatening a nation with silence but by offering that nation rewards for reform. Indeed, rhetorical diplomacy with the Castro regime in Cuba does demonstrate how Obama's policy of 'principled engagement and reward' has the potential to dramatically improve U.S.-Cuba relations in ways that were unthinkable in previous decades. While diplomatic relations that urge reform may only be achieved through engagement, Obama's shift to human rights, as a policy position, both reinforces and legitimizes U.S. leadership among allies and enemies who seek to join the world community. Because of his policy of principled engagement, it may seem that Obama's commitment to human rights rings somewhat hollow, yet I argue that Obama is more of a realist when considering how it is possible to motivate regimes to reform. Engagement with despotic regimes does not mean, as George W. Bush argued, that the United States no longer defends human rights—rather, engagement allows a president to better use rhetorical diplomacy to pressure a regime to reform and abandon its human rights abuses.

As U.S. presidents often have in the past, Obama uses his international "bully pulpit" to significantly engage world audiences. Rather than use his executive power to militarily secure U.S. interests, Obama seeks multilateral cooperation with the global community (Hook & Spanier, 2010; Roth, 2010). Roth (2010) offers an example of Obama's tone and style when addressing foreign audiences:

> Rather than merely preaching abstract principles, Obama has drawn examples from the United States' checkered history and his own life story to encourage other nations to respect human rights. The humility in this approach avoids

> Bush's hectoring tone and places the United States squarely within the community of nations as a country that, like others, struggles to respect human rights and benefits when it does so. (n.p.)

In the rhetoric of Barack Obama, the United States becomes more than a "Shining City on a Hill," to use Reagan's terminology; it becomes an example of how an imperfect union of diverse peoples may encourage an interdependent world community. Later in this chapter, I briefly analyze Obama's speech in Oslo because it demonstrates how he articulates certain U.S. values that seek to better the world through the defense of universal human rights. Obama is not ignorant of the world he inherited, and while he acknowledges that war is a reality, he argues that violence is incongruent with a U.S. identity that desires peace. In one of the first speeches abroad, Obama (2009a) similarly reveals to his Cairo University audience that their relationship with the United States need not be contentious; and he demonstrates how U.S. identity defends minority rights, and that Muslims may prosper in the United States. In both speeches, Obama communicates a U.S. identity that reluctantly goes to war but moves quickly to defend life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness at home and abroad. Obama's exposition of U.S. identity becomes far different from that of George W. Bush, and in speeches that seek inclusion and cooperation, Obama's demonstration of U.S. identity renews foreign relations with a globalized world community.

On the world stage, Obama becomes an example of the U.S. experiment in democracy, for the measure of a nation comes in its willingness to change, to improve, and to rise to the challenges that the present demands. Obama not only reveals that U.S. society is capable of embracing human rights socially in their election of an

African-American and demonstrating its propensity for change, he revels that the United States is able to turn from violence and turn toward diplomatic solutions. As the son of an itinerant Kenyan father and a struggling single mother, Obama exemplifies the promise of U.S. democracy, for his life remains a testimony of the hard-won success of the civil rights movement in the United States. In this way, Obama gains considerable ethos to speak on a number of issues: from human rights to economic disparity, he may connect to his audience in powerful ways.

Obama, as with previous presidents of the United States, presses human rights with a rhetorical power that is created through the continuity of his term in office. While U.S. presence in foreign affairs is not going to evaporate in the near future, world nations are pushed and pulled into a president's sphere of diplomatic influence, during what could be an 8-year tenure in office, through the dualities of his power: reward versus sanction, assistance versus isolation, investment versus divestment, and so forth. Presidential scholar Richard Neustadt (1960) explains, "Because they have continuing relationships with him, his future, while it lasts, supports his presence," and further, "even though there is no need of fear of him today, what he could do tomorrow may supply today's advantage" (p. 35). Through his continuity of power, Obama significantly influences his international partners, for as the prime foreign policy creator of the United States, Barack Obama commands considerable power, both in the present and the future. Leaders presently may not have need of the U.S. president, yet his future influence precludes any notions that the global community may ignore U.S. international leadership.

A president's potential to improve and change U.S. society is dependent upon rhetoric, for the powers that the Constitution vests in a president are unrealized without persuasion (Neustadt, 1960). In a democracy, rhetorical action is important to successfully implementing policy initiatives, to addressing exigencies that face the nation and the world, and to improving the social and economic standing of domestic and international citizens (Neustadt, 1960; Tulis, 1987). Rhetorical action becomes an essential element for a government tasked with representing the interests of the many, while upholding the needs of the few, for while public opinion constitutes a president's rhetorical power, it does thus powerfully constrain it. In the milieu of competing voices, a president must persuasively present foreign policy initiatives that respond to the serious issues facing the United States, while at the same time reflecting the values, desires, and needs of the global community. While isolation and punitive sanctions may be a popular strategy to motivate human rights violators to reform, those punitive measures must also coincide with diplomatic engagement which incentivizes those reforms.

**Obama's Foreign Policy of Multilateral Cooperation**

True multilateral cooperation, at least predefined in the Clinton presidency, insists that no nation can "go it alone"—even if a country disagrees with the world community. There is an implicit recognition that not everyone will be happy with the decisions that international institutions will take, but the allure of multilateral cooperation is rooted in its sustainability and resistance to domination. From climate change to Libya to infectious diseases, Obama has reinvigorated multilateral cooperation by investment in international institutions like the UN, NATO, and regional entities like

the African Union. Multilateral cooperation does not mean that the United States gives up its ability to shape the world system in ways that advantage it economically, politically, or militarily; rather, cooperation and friendship with international institutions means that the United States has the opportunity to influence the structure of those organizations from within. So long as the United States stood at odds with global bodies, there was a compelling case for the world community to institute measures that would limit what was seen as U.S. imperial power; yet through the relationships built in those institutions, the United States may once again rise to its role as leader.

United States power, as projected rhetorically, is best built through the sense that its leadership depends upon the goodwill of those who are led. While human groups will continue to resist domination and bullying from *any* outside group (too many empires to count have fallen this way), U.S. foreign policy must demonstrate that it works to the wellbeing of those it leads and does not seek its advance at the expense of others. There must be a recognition that all nations seek after their betterment; yet in order to retain its prestige, the United States must demonstrate that it seeks after the betterment of others—even sometimes exhibiting that it sacrifices its blood and treasure for others. This quixotic demand of a leader-nation seems to preclude that the United States could ever justify the numerous kinds of expenses (military, foreign aid, etc.) in return for little direct power to press its own interests, while other weaker nations are not held to the same sort of accountability by the world community. This perhaps best describes the Bush administration's primary complaint of institutional multilateralism, yet direct power only resides on the surface of the world community—it is easily punctured and

torn by the resistance of nations who loathe the hegemonic intrusions of *any* nation into their sovereign affairs.

Leading through multilateral cooperation, however, means that the United States may indirectly shape the system, fund organizations it likes, and staff world bodies with those who represent U.S. interests. J. A. Edwards (2014) states, "By pledging to listen, cooperate, and engage in more multilateral activities, the United States enhances its leadership and reinforces its exceptionalism because more countries will come to share America's vision of a global order" (p. 131). Self- sacrifice also allows the United States to instill its values in the world community and thus indirectly shape a system in order to advantage U.S. businesses who share the values of those with whom they interact. It is only through cooperative relationships that the United States may work to shape the worldviews of those nations who populate the world community; and while domination by one particular group is unacceptable (at least for very long), facilitating the construction of norms which best represent U.S. values has far-reaching benefits to the sustainability of U.S. power.

The president retains inherited executive powers, status, and authority that give him great advantages in dealing with those he wishes to persuade, yet operating within vast national and international discourse communities presents serious difficulties for a president who wishes to retain popular support (Neustadt, 1960). While messages crafted for domestic audiences may be welcomed, they may be received quite differently by constituents abroad (Dryzek, 2006; Neustadt, 1960). The successful exercise of international executive power is, therefore, predicated upon a president's rhetorical

ability to persuade a global community of nations and peoples, while maintaining an integrity with domestic constituents. Dryzek (2006) asserts, "The stakes at home can be very high, which means that the consequences abroad are either ignored or treated as secondary" because "the president's orientation to the rest of the world is often a by-product of domestic politics" (p. 111). Because the rhetorical presidency is empowered by popular domestic opinion, executive international power requires a president to mediate between his international standing and domestic popularity. However, in an increasingly globalized world, a president may not address domestic concerns at the expense of international standing, for international prestige impacts national security, global commercial interests, and ultimately U.S. power (K. K. Campbell & Jamieson, 2008; Dryzek, 2006; Greenstein, 2009). Although some solutions to international concerns are incongruent with domestic sensibilities, Hook and Spanier (2010) report that "in surveys Americans favored an active world role for the United States, especially on issues related to global justice, the environment, and arms control" (p. 362). Isolationism and unilateral action by a president, although such positions may be temporarily popular domestically, are thus incongruent with rhetorical diplomacy. Defined by Obama, the United States not only protects national security but also defends the universal human rights of the world community; and by communicating this virtue, Obama renews U.S. relationships with the world community.

United States presidents, indeed all national leaders, are provided with a powerful opportunity to define the governing reality of their respective societies, and although those realities are publically contested, presidents seek to maintain official

versions of national history, collective memory, and social values. The modern age of U.S. politics is further complicated upon considering an audience of diverse global communities that seek further interdependency in a variety of financial, security, and environmental concerns. Nye (2002) expounds upon this point: "Failure to pay proper respect to the opinion of others and to incorporate a broad conception of justice into our national interests will eventually come to hurt us" (p. 137). Positioned on a world stage, U.S. presidents do not only represent the interests of the U.S. government, they present the cultural values of the United States and do thus shape the world opinion of the U.S. people as a whole. Therefore, when President Barack Obama addresses a global body, he does so with the recognition that he must communicate a U.S. national identity that recognizes the importance of fostering global cooperation.

As the national leader, the U.S. president has the unique opportunity to define the perceived value of U.S. involvement in global affairs. More importantly, as leader of the world's sole military superpower, Obama is presented with the opportunity to define the characteristics of the ideal world citizen and how that citizen should act in a global democratic community. Bruner (2005) observes that "leaders and other advocates usually articulate visions of what it means to be a citizen of the state or a member of a national (or global) community through narratives based upon 'codes of the unsayable' or strategic public memory" (p. 314). Speaking before a global audience, Obama must present official versions of U.S. culture and adhere to the expectations of his audience at home, but he must also adhere to the contextual constraints of his culturally and politically diverse audience. Although technological advances offer unprecedented

access to world audiences and thus present national rhetors with the opportunity to influence global opinion of U.S. national interests, they are further constrained by the diverse cultural and national "ways in which those subjects are articulated" (Bruner, p. 214). Speaking in a congested media environment, a president's presentation of U.S. society and governance competes with other worldviews that may presuppose a negative relationship with the United States. A president must, therefore, rhetorically construct a public memory that locates a virtuous and valorous past in order to legitimately claim world leadership. Exploration into how U.S. leaders manipulate the perceptions of their world audiences is extremely important to the study of rhetorical diplomacy, for political prestige is important for increased authority to influence world affairs and influence how the world community is shaped to favor the United States.

Following an administration which resisted multilateral engagement and angered the world, Obama sought to repair U.S. image abroad while reasserting presidential leadership in areas that had been neglected. Zarefsky (2014) explains that Obama "sought instead to emphasize special responsibilities of the United States to help in creating partnerships on an equal basis with other nations sharing similar values" (p. 109). In elevating the importance of multilateral relationships, Obama found ways to unite international communities behind his project of economic and political liberalization. In doing so, Obama shifted an emphasis away from the autarchic foreign policy formulation of his immediate predecessor, and reinvigorated a system of relations which hearkened back to ways of interacting with the world community. Singh (2012) clarifies:

> Obama has adopted not so much a quintessentially realist statecraft (in the international relations sense of "realism") as an unrelentingly pragmatic, prudent and at times accommodationist approach to world affairs—not so dissimilar, in important respects, to those of Dwight D. Eisenhower, Richard Nixon, and George H.W. Bush. (p. 6)

Obama's election meant a return to pragmatic foreign policies of presidents who recognized that the United States cannot "go it alone" without suffering costs to credibility, as well as the shouldering the significant financial burden of underwriting the security of the world.

Obama recognized what the Bush administration overlooked: unilaterally policing a globalized world and intervening in localized conflicts throughout immense geographic areas is too great a burden for a single nation. Brown (2013) explains the implication of this burden in greater detail:

> Myriad conflicts around the world but particularly in the Middle East and Southwest Asia illustrate the extent to which localized conflicts can at any point mutate into global conflicts. Adding to such developments is a growing list of transnational challenges arising from fragile and failing states, the solutions for which necessitate enhanced regional and international cooperation and leadership. (p. 232)

There are realistic and pragmatic reasons for helping facilitate multilateral cooperation to address exigencies that arise throughout the world. Beyond the massive financial costs of such projects, cooperating with regional organizations helps shelter the United States from criticism that the United States is intruding in the affairs of sovereign states only for its own imperialistic advantage. Partnering with regional organizations helps legitimize U.S. leadership because those local groups impart some their own credibility to U.S. interlocutors. As I will exhaustively explore later in this dissertation, having a credible

partner 'on the ground' is the only sound method of sustainably assisting a people in their struggle for democracy. In Asia, violent intrusion into the affairs of another state, without the cooperation of local or regional groups, only gives enemies of the United States ammunition for powerful counter-colonial narratives that call for resistance against the domination of Western imperial powers. Miles (2013) argues:

> By prioritizing diplomacy the US would be able to reduce opponents' use of anti-American sentiment as a rallying call to maintain power and control, while international allies would, conceivably, be willing to support an eventual policy of confrontation if they were convinced that all diplomatic avenues had been explored. (p. 148)

While the United States may mean well (which is debatable), a president must understand the oppressive colonial past of many developing nations with whom it seeks to influence. It is only through the voice of local and regional leaders that a president may retain sufficient credibility to shape Asia's globalization in ways that benefits the United States.

Finally, Obama's preference for multilateral cooperation has merit in creating the sort of extended stability upon which trade and financial markets depend. Mingst (2006) states, "Multilateral institutions, by slowing down the policy process, may prevent rash moves by states reacting under pressure" (p. 137). While the United States may not appreciate obstacles that confront its unilateral action, a greater dependence on multilateral cooperation could have prevented the United States from making the rash and costly decision to pursue a war in Iraq that ultimately resulted in the continuing burden of nation-building. While no nation, or individual for that matter, reacts coolly when wounded or threatened, it is often the case that calmer heads must prevail to

prevent escalation of a situation that is worsened through further violence. Leadership in foreign affairs requires pragmatic and strategic decision- making, and while the United States must defend its interests, the ways of achieving security in a globalized world may be best realized through multilateral cooperation. J. A. Edwards (2014) concludes:

> According to the president's [Obama] logic, sharing the burdens of leadership with other nation states on issues like terrorism and climate change would create greater unity throughout the world because these nations would be investing and exchanging ideas on combating mutual concerns. (p. 139)

Thus, pragmatic solutions do not reflexively eschew violence; yet recognizing the strategic center of gravity in foreign relations may prevent any state from engaging in military responses that destabilize the global economy—an economic system upon which U.S. corporations increasingly rely.

## Obama's Foreign Policy of Engagement

Underpinning the rhetorical diplomacy is a willingness to engage world leaders and peoples, and while the Cold War perhaps did not necessitate diplomatic engagement, the new globalized world demands that a president seek alternative solutions to military action that might destabilize the global economy. Hancock (2007) argues, "Since the deployment of military force can change the actions but not the opinions of individuals, resistance against the U.S. will most likely continue or intensify until the way U.S. power is understood first changes" (p. 153). Hancock points to a feature of rhetorical diplomacy: military intervention disrupts and limits the capacity of U.S. leaders to facilitate friendly relations with world leaders. A globally interconnected and interdependent community naturally means that coercion may spur greater conflict as the

states, whom the U.S. attacks, seek assistance from those outside their borders in order to help defend against the U.S. military. This logically means that a conflict with one state may expand into a regional conflict as state actors become involved in the conflict of their neighbor. Zarefsky (2014) argues, "For Obama, that trajectory had run its course, meeting its demise on the deserts of Iraq, and had become counterproductive to the goal of global leadership" (p. 109). Obama, viewing this dynamic as inherently unsustainable and potentially threatening the stability of the global economy, has turned to rhetorical diplomacy as his central approach to foreign relations.

Obama's "charm offensive" (referred to as 'the apology tour' by Republican critics) in the first years of his presidency sought to reshape the narrative of world leaders who had become cynical of the benefits of U.S. leadership. Singh (2012) reports, "Obama has therefore pursued a strategy of engagement that extends 'respect' to civilization, states and people alike, designed to replenish America's depleted stock of international capital and begin the process of realizing his vision of a more peaceful, stable, and even, ultimately, a nuclear weapons-free world" (p. 7). Speaking to the world on numerous occasions, Obama sought to position his office as responsive to global exigencies while respecting the needs of that community; and the rewards of that project are clear: rhetorical diplomacy is a cheaper, more sustainable, and more effective method of dealing with world problems. McFaul (2010) argues, "Most obviously, the transformation of autocratic foes and democratic allies has reduced the need for military spending—the famous 'guns and butter' trade-off" (p. 117). While not all issues may be solved through rhetorical diplomacy, Obama's insistence to first avail himself of the

possibility of a diplomatic solution will certainly help serve as a check on more reflexive military responses. Paupp (2010) explains how this works:

> By removing military threats and counter threats from international discourse, we no longer need to worry about taking exceptional measures to deal with perceived threats. . . . By removing military threats and the fears, that they engender, we can then begin to terminate the most deadly aspects of historical rivalry between states—the threat of war and the destruction of 'the other'" (p. 81).

Paupp points to a feature of Obama's foreign policy formulation: military threats unnecessarily escalate already tense situations. A sincere commitment to engagement means pursuing good faith agreements, which are not predicated on the use of military intervention if dialogue fails to immediately produce a settlement. I am not arguing here that military intervention is not an option for the United States, for violence is a fairly consistent human trait; however, vocal threats of violence limit the capacity for interlocutors to calm a volatile situation and reach amenable rapprochement. However, Obama's involvement in post-Arab Spring Libya reveals the limitations of rhetorical diplomacy, for while Obama sought diplomatic solutions to the Libyan conflict, he did commit U.S. Air Force resources when such measures proved unfeasible.

## Analysis of Obama Nobel Peace Prize Lecture

I have provided considerable space in the following few sections to analyze in detail Obama's Speech to the Nobel Peace Prize Forum because it demonstrates the central features of Obama's rhetorical diplomacy. In his speech to the Nobel forum he sought to present a favorable history of U.S. involvement in global affairs as a way to reinvigorate U.S. alliances. A rhetorical analysis of how rhetorical diplomacy operates in

global forums is important for understanding how global cooperation can occur and how speeches help build alliances necessary to press U.S. policy.

An analysis of President Obama's speech in Oslo (2009b) must begin with an exploration into how American identity is defined globally and how his speech is reflective of a shared global identity located in the resonate public memory of his audience. In the wake of his globally unpopular predecessor, President Obama is presented with the opportunity to positively reconstruct American identity. Bruner (2005) observes how this forum operates rhetorically: "National identity is constructed to a significant degree by the articulations of state leaders, historians and other advocates, especially when these articulations are disseminated on a mass scale" (p. 319). Therefore, Obama's Nobel speech is not only important for his foreign policy initiatives, but it also seeks to define what is U.S. national identity and how the world benefits from aligning with U.S. leadership in global affairs.

Obama's Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech represents how rhetorical power is created in a world forum. As an artifact of rhetorical diplomacy, Obama's speech to a diverse global audience represents how a president may rhetorically construct a version of reality that elicits global cooperation from the world community. Vested with significant power to construct and to conduct U.S. foreign policy largely independent of Congressional oversight, Obama's words to the global community carry significant weight. Although the purpose of this dissertation is not to compare the presence of international leaders in global forums, one may concur that a U.S. president's words are

powerful due to his status as Commander-in-Chief of a military superpower, author of binding executive agreements, and principal creator of U.S. foreign policy.

In some ways, rhetorical diplomacy gains significant authority by the nature of U.S. foreign policy, for the President of the United States of America is not only respected for what he can do *for* a nation but is respected because of what he can do *against* a nation. Thus, rhetorical diplomacy commands considerable power to lead nations to confront issues that endanger the global community, and by establishing U.S. global leadership, the president secures significant rhetorical power to influence the direction of globalization in ways that favor the United States. Rhetorical diplomacy positions a president's speechmaking and agenda-setting ability to both elevate the appeal of forming alliances with the United States, while increasing the visibility of certain issues important to U.S. policy. Rhetorical diplomacy accomplishes this by locating shared norms and values which assist the president in persuading his audience that aligning themselves with the United States coalesces both with their values and interests. J. R. Cox (1990) maintains that this "effort to locate the existing within the horizon of its alternatives in history" is found in an argument that "rationalizes what Marcuse calls a 'determinate choice': a 'seizure of one among other ways of comprehending, organizing, and transforming reality'" (p. 8). As the principal national rhetor of the United States, Barack Obama must transcend his station as a political leader and construct a version of public memory that elevates the resonate ethos of the United States through epideictic rhetoric. Explaining the rhetorical significance of public memory, Bodnar (1992) maintains that "public memory is a body of beliefs and ideas

about the past that help a public or society understand both its past, present, and by implication, its future" (p. 15). Through his management of public memory, Obama proposes an idealistic vision of a democratic world that is concerned with all members of global society.

Obama (2009b) begins his lecture to his globally diverse audience by acknowledging the inherent paradox of receiving the Nobel Peace Prize as a war-time president: "I come here with an acute sense of the costs of armed conflict-filled with difficult questions about the relationship between war and peace, and our effort to replace one with the other" (n.p.). Obama's opening strategy explores the history of human conflict, for he must legitimize his present military campaign in Afghanistan by defining violence as an inherent characteristic of the human condition. Bodnar (1992) explains, "Official culture relies on 'dogmatic formalism' and the restatement of reality in ideal rather than complex or ambiguous terms" (p. 14). In this strategy, Obama's mission is to define violence as part of a greater human narrative that sometimes seeks to hold democratic interests hostage, and therefore requires military intervention.

As the global mediator of official U.S. identity, Obama seeks to present U.S. military affairs as a reflection of human reality, yet he presents past U.S. responses to conflict in ideal terms by locating his audience's historical relationship with violence:

> In the wake of such destruction, and with the advent of the nuclear age, it became clear to victor and vanquished alike that the world needed institutions to prevent another world war. And so, a quarter century after the United States Senate rejected the League of Nations—an idea for which Woodrow Wilson received this prize—America led the world in constructing an architecture to keep the peace: a Marshall Plan and a United Nations, mechanisms to govern the

> waging of war, treaties to protect human rights, prevent genocide, restrict the most dangerous weapons. (Obama, 2009b, n.p.)

Obama must first rhetorically situate the presentation of his military policies in the midst of the global narrative. He must find positive examples of U.S. actions, but he is also somewhat constrained by the global perspective of his audience and a relatively limited collective and unified recent historical memory of positive U.S. involvement in world affairs. Bruner (2005) explains that Obama is also contextually constrained by the globally diverse nature of his audience and therefore subject "to the limits imposed upon individuals by the ways in which those subjects are articulated" (p. 314). Obama's historical analysis of 20th-century European history is important to his subsequent arguments, because it constructs a version of reality that maintains the prominent importance of U.S. military efforts on a global scale.

Obama (2009b) now centers the discussion of his present military engagement by defining the reality of present world conditions:

> We must begin by acknowledging the hard truth: We will not eradicate violent conflict in our lifetimes. There will be times when nations—acting individually or in concert—will find the use of force not only necessary but morally justified. (n.p.)

Obama seeks to control the discussion of prolonging military engagement in Afghanistan, for in the days leading up to his nomination of the Nobel Peace Prize, many world community leaders publically pressed Obama to remove American forces from Afghanistan and Iraq. In many ways, his Nobel Peace Prize speech was an announcement to the world community that he was determined to continue his prosecution of war in Afghanistan. While he had not yet publicized his official military

strategy for Afghanistan, his speech certainly sought to preemptively suppress any future misgivings by world community leaders.

Understanding the temporal context of his speech is important, for Obama must therefore legitimize future actions that directly conflict with the ethos of Nobel Peace Prize recipients. However, in an effort to manage public memory, in relation to his foreign policies initiatives, he must first produce his opposition's argument for peace while presenting a historical viewpoint that is credible within the contextual constraints of his Nobel Prize audience. In order to better manage the public memory related to global conflict, Obama employs an argument by division; Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (2008) explain the significance of argument *by division*:

> To argue by division presupposes that the sum of the parts equals the whole and that the situations which are being considered exhaust the possibilities . . . . After pointing out the absurdity of the adversary's dissertation—which is sometimes completely fabricated to suit the argument—the speaker then proposes his own dissertation as the only remaining possibility. (p. 238)

While maintaining his prestige and status as a definitively progressive U.S. president, Obama's strategy begins with several rhetorical moves that seek to construct a presiding reality in which his opposition's argument can find little legitimacy. Obama may certainly offer arguments that are dismissive of his audience's globally-centered viewpoints and defend U.S. sovereign right to unilaterally protect its interests, as his predecessor often did. However, Obama's strategy seeks not only to legitimize his foreign policy initiatives but to elevate the international credibility of his presidency and thus elevate U.S. standing in the world community. Acutely aware of inherent conflicts

of interest, Obama (2009b) seeks to elevate his resonate ethos by presenting the argument of a prominent pacifist and Nobel Laureate:

> I make this statement mindful of what Martin Luther King Jr. said in this same ceremony years ago: "Violence never brings permanent peace. It solves no social problem: it merely creates new and more complicated ones." As someone who stands here as a direct consequence of Dr. King's life work, I am living testimony to the moral force of non-violence. I know there's nothing weak—nothing passive—nothing naïve—in the creed and lives of Gandhi and King. (n.p.)

Obama's strategy here is to first acknowledge the value of nonviolence, yet he does so only to locate it into a category of the *ideal reality* and argue that it is an incongruent position in *today's reality*. Obama offers what is perhaps the most laudable argument in the peace movement, only to dismiss its legitimacy in a world where violence is an everyday reality.

Obama (2009b) now constructs a reality in which nonviolence is an impossible and illogical mandate:

> But as a head of state sworn to protect and defend my nation, I cannot be guided by their examples alone. I face the world as it is, and cannot stand idle in the face of threats to the American people. For make no mistake: Evil does exist in the world. A non-violent movement could not have halted Hitler's armies. Negotiations cannot convince al Qaeda's leaders to lay down their arms. To say that force may sometimes be necessary is not a call to cynicism—it is a recognition of history; the imperfections of man and the limits of reason. (n.p.)

I come back to Perelman's (1982) explanation of an 'argument by division' as a way to unpack the implications of Obama's strategy: Obama does not acknowledge other possibilities beyond the nonviolent movement of King and Gandhi—comparatively extreme philosophies in the peace movement. There are certainly a multitude of alternatives to the present military action which the United States has undertaken, yet by

subsuming those arguments under the umbrella of complete pacifism, he thus positions himself to dismiss those arguments altogether. Bruner (2005) explains that "every articulation necessarily highlights some features at the expense of others; it is simply that some articulations tend to repress more potentially significant political issues than others (thus some are more ethical than others)" (p. 316). The suppression of a potential ethical objection becomes possible not by his mandate as President of the United States, but by his methodical construction of a reality in which violence exists and democratic nations must sometimes address injustice militarily. J. R. Cox (1990) maintains:

> [An] argument that recollects and remembers would seem to require, initially, that its claims be located within the horizon of an historical totality. It takes the facts of existing discourse as elements of a larger diachronic process from which they cannot be isolated. (p. 8)

Obama's argument is founded upon a history of violence, a history that is embodied in the public memory of his mostly European audience, and by utilizing collective memories of World War II, Obama transforms the present reality of global conflict. The primary strategy of this argument seeks to define what constitutes the legitimate use of force. Obama utilizes an important location of global public memory, for al Qaeda becomes the European equivalent of a Hitler: an unavoidable violent conflict.

Continuing his strategy to define the narrative of reality, Obama locates the valorous history of the United States in order to apply the past value that the United State has brought to global security and apply it to the present. Obama seeks to construct the public memory of past esteem and apply it to his present actions. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (2008) concretely define the function of the *rule of justice* strategy:

> Indeed in every concrete situation a prior classification of objects and the existence of precedents as to the manner of treating them is indispensable. The rule of justice furnishes the foundation which makes it possible to pass from earlier cases to future cases. It makes it possible to present the use of precedent in the form of a quasi-logical argument. . . . This rule presupposes the partial identification of beings by putting them in a category and applying the treatment foreseen for members of that category. (p. 219)

It is important to note that as a political leader of the U.S. people, Obama must observe a primary function of the rhetorical presidency—maintaining official versions of history and cultivating the formation of an American national identity. This official history is most notable in Obama's (2009b) utilization of the rule of justice:

> I raise this point, I begin with this point because in many countries there is a deep ambivalence about military action today, no matter what the cause. And at times, this is joined by a reflexive suspicion of America, the world's sole military superpower. . . . Whatever mistakes we have made, the plain fact is this: The United States of America has helped underwrite global security for more than six decades with the blood of our citizens and the strength of our arms. The service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform has promoted peace and prosperity from Germany to Korea, and enabled democracy to take hold in places like the Balkans. We have borne this burden not because we seek to impose our will. We have done so out of enlightened self-interest —because we seek a better future for our children and grandchildren, and we believe that their lives will be better if others' children and grandchildren can live in freedom and prosperity. (n.p.)

Obama first addresses the critical suspicion of U.S. foreign policy by illustrating the significant past value of U.S. military involvement. Explained by the rule of justice, Obama locates specific precedents of U.S. benevolence, and although there is ample ground for dispute of U.S. interests abroad, he shifts the focus away from U.S. mistakes and presents a constructed view of history. This strategy seeks to define the overall character of U.S. national identity; and by offering an official characterization of U.S. national identity, Obama elevates the significance of U.S. values and ideals and thus

negotiates the assessment of the United States in world affairs. Bruner (2005) explains that "dominant characterizations of national identities oftentimes, if not usually, mask significant social contradictions, marginalize other voices and repress skepticism through the promotion of unity at the expense of radically honest social critique" (p. 321). There are arguably other positions that might contest Obama's assertion that the United States has consistently acted through enlightened self-interest, yet by positioning the discussion in terms of U.S. honorable sacrifice, those positions become difficult to ethically maintain or publicize.

Confronted with the task of restoring and cultivating the esteem of the United States, Obama must endeavor to distance himself from more contemporary examples of U.S. brutality and locate a resonate public memory of U.S. generosity through an epideictic demonstration of honor and sacrifice (Parry-Giles & Parry-Giles, 2000). In Obama's rhetoric, sacrifice, burden, and service become the hallmarks of true U.S. identity. Revealing the significance of this strategy, Burke (1970) observes, "If any given terminology is a reflection of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a selection of reality; and to this extent it must function also as a deflection of reality" (p. 45). Obama's selection of terminology that defines the U.S. national identity is at once a deflection of worldviews of U.S. interventionist policies and a selective assessment of U.S. actions and values. Furthermore, Obama's terminology locates the honor-bound idealism found in the contextual backgrounds of his mostly European audience; and confronted with the reality (albeit constructed) of American valor and sacrifice, his audience must accept that Obama represents a virtuous and laudable nation.

Obama's Nobel speech elevates the credibility of U.S. leadership and thus helps Obama build those alliances necessary for rhetorical diplomacy. While the United States may think it is capable of 'going it alone,' as George W. Bush sometimes proved, alliances better help the United States pressure a resistant regime to adopt U.S. policy. Obama's speech systematically works to elevate his ethos, for Obama's alliances with world leaders are predicated on the sense that he is fair-minded and perceived as having goodwill toward his audience. Thus, Obama's construction of ethos reveals a rhetorical sensitivity for his audience.

**Obama Distances His Administration From George W. Bush**

Offering tangible evidence of a nation's beneficence is often best accomplished through the presentation of notable persons who best represent the erudite qualities of a collective identity. Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles (2000) assert that "collective memory works as an interpretive strategy for the definition of political image, as political actors seek to link their character to familiar and secure markers of collective identity drawn from the community's shared past" (p. 419). Conversely, an attempt to define U.S. values by drawing upon the works of virtuous U.S. citizens consequently suppresses the public perceptions that deem U.S. foreign affairs as malevolent. Following his construction of U.S. altruism, Obama (2009b) offers himself to his Nobel audience as a virtuous defender of U.S. values in order to present the virtuous qualities of his foreign policy initiatives:

> Concretely, we must direct our effort to the task that President Kennedy called for long ago. "Let us focus," he said, "on a more practical, more attainable peace, based not on a sudden revolution in human nature but on a gradual

> evolution in human institutions." A gradual evolution of human institutions. What might this evolution look like? What might these practical steps be? (n.p.)

It is important to note the significance of Obama's Nobel Peace Prize lecture, for the pervading world opinion of his predecessor, George W. Bush, was largely negative in numerous global communities (K. K. Campbell & Jamieson, 2008; Greenstein, 2009; Hook & Spanier, 2010). Therefore, Obama's central task must locate a central and positive point in the collective memory of his audience, who are representatives of international communities. The contemporary champion of U.S. democracy, John F. Kennedy, legitimizes Obama's presidency and global perspective. Obama's use of Kennedy is particularly beneficial to his argument, for invoking the words of Kennedy, a martyr of modern democracy, cleanses the impurities of the previous administration and redeems the virtues of the present administration. Reconstituting his presidency, Obama's political definition as leader of the U.S. people now becomes compared to a virtuous and popular past president, rather than the comparatively unpopular President George W. Bush. Creating distance from a recent past and submitting examples of his presidential virtue defines the acts of the Bush administration as an aberration of the constitutive values of U.S. citizens; and reasserting the virtues of U.S. leadership in foreign affairs, Obama may then present his initiatives favorably.

Following the purification of the international rhetorical presidency, Obama's task is now to articulate a shared sense of community and values. Because the Nobel Peace Prize Committee is a body that recognizes the endeavors of private individuals, Obama is constrained by the limited selection of those who may reflect positively on the

virtuous elements of his administration. Bodnar (1992) explains that "memory adds perspective and authenticity to the views articulated in this exchange; defenders of official and vernacular interests are selectively retrieved from the past to perform similar functions in the present" (p. 15). Therefore, Obama must locate an individual who both functions as an esteemed representative of Nobel Peace Prize virtues and has a cleansing effect upon his present political engagement. Leading up to his effort to rhetorically distance his policies from those of the recent administration, Obama offers his audience evidence of a renewed sense of justice and virtue:

> The Nobel Committee recognized this truth in awarding its first prize for peace to Henry Dunant—the founder of the Red Cross, and a driving force behind the Geneva Conventions. Where force is necessary, we have a moral and strategic interest in binding ourselves to certain rules of conduct. And even as we confront a vicious adversary that abides by no rules, I believe the United States of America must remain a standard bearer in the conduct of war. That is what makes us different from those whom we fight. That is a source of our strength. That is why I prohibited torture. That is why I ordered the prison at Guantanamo Bay closed. And that is why I have reaffirmed America's commitment to abide by the Geneva Conventions. We lose ourselves when we compromise the very ideals that we fight to defend. (n.p.)

The prevailing rhetorical strategy that constructs a reality in which his audience can identify their shared history and cultural values is, by necessity, an Argument by Comparison; Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (2008) explain the significance of this strategy:

> On the one hand, the absolute value of the term which is used as a standard influences the value of the terms belonging to the same series which are compared with it. This effect is observed by perception; let us note that the repetition of the terms which are compared all seem to concur in establishing a neutral level of adaptation. (p. 243)

Arguments by comparison attempt to manipulate the perception of reality by which constitutive actions are judged. An argument by comparison seeks to define the reality by which something is judged, and by presenting an idea, person, or thing that is reprehensible or deficient and comparing it with an idea, person, or thing that is significantly superior to that which is compared, increases adherence to one's argument. Furthermore, rather than leaving an audience to ascertain the value of his foreign policy initiatives through their preconceived conception of reality, Obama endeavors to control the basis by which his presidency is judged. Thus, the significance of Obama's political mandates are now located within a greater global discussion of human rights and U.S. foreign policy. Therefore, Obama presents himself not only as a benevolent leader, but as a U.S. president whose policies are founded upon norms expressed by the world community. One may argue that there are negative and pernicious elements of U.S. foreign affairs that should be addressed beyond Guantanamo Bay, such as the continued wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. recalcitrance in the global climate crisis, and the continued presence of military forces throughout Europe and Asia. However, by presenting egregious instances of particular negative aspects of U.S. foreign policy, Obama may direct his audience's attention away from a larger discussion of America's authority to act in the global community. Thus, by offering Henry Dunant, a hero of Nobel Laureate virtues, as a significant influence in his political philosophy, Obama transcends his station as a leader of a national democracy and becomes a cooperative partner with the democratic world.

## Obama Deliberates Global Policy

After sufficiently elevating American virtue and the ethos of his presidential foreign affairs platform to his Nobel audience, Obama turns his attention to exigencies that presently threaten both U.S. national security as well as the security of the democratic world. Obama (2009b) is at once constrained contextually by the diversity of his audience, and thus must convince his audience that his foreign policy coalesces with globally affirmed mandates:

> In the middle of the last century, nations agreed to be bound by a treaty whose bargain is clear: All will have access to peaceful nuclear power; those without nuclear weapons will forsake them; and those with nuclear weapons will work towards disarmament. I am committed to upholding this treaty. It is a centerpiece of my foreign policy. And I'm working with President Medvedev to reduce America and Russia's nuclear stockpiles. But it is also incumbent upon all of us to insist that nations like Iran and North Korea do not game the system. Those who claim to respect international law cannot avert their eyes when those laws are flouted. (n.p.)

Obama initially legitimizes his demands for global cooperation with his initiatives by reminding his audience of their duty-bound obligation to uphold previously agreed upon treaties. While the previous George W. Bush administration acted unilaterally, Obama elicits the cooperation of the world community. Obama's recriminative policy toward those that flaunt world treaties is not defined by U.S. national interests, but is a reflection of his staunch support of global cooperation. He therefore elevates the legitimacy of proposed sanctions by constructing what an ideal citizen of the world stands for; thus, Obama transcends his classification as a national defender of U.S. interests and becomes a defender of the global community.

Obama's exploration into the historical value of U.S. interaction with the global community seeks to elevate history to an ideal reality that is thus monumentalized. His management of collective memory is fundamentally important to his discussion of the means by which world leaders should uphold their community values. By presenting an idealized version of history, Obama seeks to create an ideal reality where world leaders uphold their shared values. Bruner (2005) explains:

> State leaders, eager to acquire a general consensus among citizens in order to gain compliance in relation to the exercise of the 'legitimate' means of violence, monumentalize history in order to create the ideal citizen or the ideal image of what the state stands for. (p. 318)

Although Bruner examines the ideal state citizen, in a global context, an ideal citizen of the world enforces official agreements and acts cooperatively with other states. Constructing a contrasting ideal global citizen, Obama implicates and marginalizes those who do not uphold the ideology of world citizenship. The constitutive identity of the ideal world citizen carries an obligation to address violations of the global community. Thus, in order to maintain their legitimate position as ideal citizens, Obama (2009b) asserts that world leaders are obligated to act against those who threaten global security:

> Those who claim to respect international law cannot avert their eyes when those laws are flouted. Those who care for their own security cannot ignore the danger of an arms race in the Middle East or East Asia. Those who seek peace cannot stand idly by as nations arm themselves for nuclear war. (n.p.)

The rule of justice perhaps again explains the rhetorical effectiveness of this argument, for "the rule of justice requires giving identical treatment to beings or situations of the same kind" (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 2008, p. 219). This strategy is particularly effective because a world body which first requests Obama's cooperation with

international governmental institutions cannot legitimately allow other nations to violate international treaties without implementing repressive measures such as sanctions and other means of recrimination. Obama asserts that the same standards which rule the conduct of the United States, indeed all members of the global community, should be rigorously applied to all nations. Crystallizing Obama's employment of the rule of justice into enthymematic logic provides a clearer understanding of his rhetorical strategy: if all members must adhere to international standards proposed by the national leaders of his audience, then all members who flaunt international law should be punished. Thus, by subsuming U.S. foreign policy under the umbrella of global governance, Obama expertly shifts the balance of power to his favor. Certainly, time may judge the effectiveness of this strategy, yet Obama's rhetorical diplomacy may offer effective strategies for future presidents who wish to positively define their foreign policy initiatives.

**Obama's Moral Imagination**

Obama's concluding remarks before his Nobel audience promote an idealistic vision of the world community. By offering his peaceful vision for humanity, he therefore actively competes with more violent ideologies. However, in the process of arguing against certain forms of idealism, he necessarily must offer an alternative and competing ideology; for any argument against an ideology does, therefore, offer something in its place—this is often an ideology of a different sort. Obama's strategy offers a pragmatic argument that defines the connection between extremism and violence; Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (2008) explain the rhetorical significance of

this strategy:

> The connection between a cause and its consequences can be perceived with such sharpness that an immediate, emotive, unexplained transfer is brought about from the latter to the former, in such a way that one believes one prizes something for its own value, whereas in actual fact the consequences are the important thing. (p. 267)

A pragmatic argument locates the cause of violence in the modern global community.

Rather than explain the consequences of extremism, Obama (2009b) merely defines extremist ideologies in abstract and emotional terms:

> These extremists are not the first to kill in the name of God; the cruelties of the Crusades are amply recorded. But they remind us that no Holy War can ever be a just war. For if you truly believe that you are carrying out divine will, then there is no need for restraint—no need to spare the pregnant mother, or the medic, or the Red Cross worker, or even a person of one's own faith. Such a warped view of religion is not just incompatible with the concept of peace, but I believe it's incompatible with the very purpose of faith—for the one rule that lies at the heart of every major religion is that we do unto others as we would have them do unto us. (n.p.)

Obama manages the public memory of violent extremism by defining its historical applications in both Christian and Islamic terms and to marginalize certain expressions of faith that favor violent forms of devotion. To a larger degree, Obama constructs his argument pragmatically to reflect the diverse body of collective identities of his global audience; for in Obama's constructing of reality, extreme versions of ideology prevent cooperation with other faiths and do, therefore, conflict with the governing ethos of international institutions. Furthermore, the presentation of extremism allows Obama to offer a contrasting ideology that is then compared to extremist ideologies, rather than those ideologies of his U.S. and world audiences. In a quasi-logical manipulation of

reality, U.S. cultural values become purified and virtuous in comparison to the values of Islamic extremists, who use violence. Although many members of his audience may legitimately assert that the United States has been responsible for much violence, Obama constructs a version of U.S. values that are inherently peaceful, but only become violent in response to injustice. This strategy becomes fundamentally important to Obama's legitimacy as the national leader of the United States, for while Obama seeks to cooperate with global communities, he must not violate the cultural norms that empower his leadership of U.S. communities. Extremism becomes a relatively safe foundation to frame his moral vision of the world and, by proxy, the United States.

Obama's closing remarks reveal his alacrity in mediating between the differing political, religious, and cultural collective identities in a world forum, as well as those of the United States as a nation. Obama (2009b) now completes his pragmatic argument:

> The non-violence practiced by men like Gandhi and King may not have been practical or possible in every circumstance, but the love that they preached—their fundamental faith in human progress—that must always be the North Star that guides us on our journey. For if we lose that faith—if we dismiss it as silly or naïve; if we divorce it from the decisions that we make on issues of war and peace—then we lose what's best about humanity. We lose our sense of possibility. We lose our moral compass. Like generations have before us, we must reject that future. (n.p.)

Obama's closing remarks become significant when acknowledging the constraints pressed upon him by both his U.S. audience at home and his Nobel Peace Prize audience abroad. Certainly, U.S. religious ideologies do not find significant incongruence of the notion of military intervention and their faith—conservative and religious Christian communities were significant sources of popularity for the previous administration.

Furthermore, U.S. military actions have historically been viewed ideologically as somehow divinely inspired by the broader community of Christian communities throughout the United States. Belsey (1980) explains how ideologies obscure factual representations of reality:

> Ideology obscures the real conditions of existence by presenting partial truths. It is a set of omissions, gaps rather than lies, smoothing over contradictions, appearing to provide answers to questions which in reality it evades, and masquerading as coherence in the interests of the social relations generated by and necessary to the existing mode of production. (p. 48)

In order to maintain his religious neutrality and not alienate his constituents, Obama must therefore promote a vision of faith that conflicts with the extremist ideologies of communities outside of the United States. Therefore, Obama (2009b) can indirectly comment on any number of ideologies that conflict with his vision of peace and diplomatic efforts, while maintaining the legitimacy of his political platform—"clear-eyed, we can understand that there will be war, and still strive for peace" (n.p.).

## Obama's Burma Speeches and Statements

Obama's foreign policy with Burma can be explained as a reaction to the failure's of preceding presidents, notably that of George W. Bush, and as the utilization of the full potential of rhetorical diplomacy. Obama's review of U.S. Burma policy, spurred by the recent hardships endured by the Burmese people at the hands of the ruling junta, eventually led to a shift in how the United States would interact with the junta. Obama pragmatically addressed U.S.-Burma relations and instituted direct dialogue with the junta. This dramatic shift away from the previous era led to steps towards democratic reform in Burma.

Barack Obama came into office with the expressed desire to reorient U.S. foreign policy toward collaboration and cooperation with the world community (Clapp, 2010). Obama sought to elevate U.S.'s image abroad by distancing his administration from the caustic international relations that George W. Bush often caused. Holliday (2011) explains that "while maintaining a clear view of American national interests, Barack Obama has made a significant break with the George W. Bush years by promoting inclusive approaches to global problems based on responsibility and partnership" (p. 16). Obama's interaction with the world community reveals a rhetorically sensitive understanding of the contextual constraints faced by a U.S. president abroad.

Obama's shift in U.S. foreign relations can be explained through his rhetorical sensitivity to the demands of engaging with the international community, yet U.S. campaign politics often create polarity between the actions of the previous administration and the sentiments of the incoming administration. Indyk and colleagues (2012) explain:

> Obama's efforts to engage with the outliers of the international system have their origin in his efforts during the presidential campaign to distinguish himself both from George W. Bush and from the other candidates by arguing the need for engaging with nations with which we disagree. (pp.185-186)

This shift from a Manichean engagement with the world to a pragmatic understanding of the role U.S. foreign relations reveals that Obama not only seeks to distance himself from George W. Bush, who was internationally unpopular, but he pursued U.S. foreign interests even when that meant engaging previously shunned governments. Indyk and

colleagues conclude that "significant accomplishment—and a supreme irony—of this presidency is that Obama has managed to isolate certain extremist actors more effectively than George W. Bush did" (p. 260). Thus, while the shift from George W. Bush policies caused the world to view U.S. foreign interaction through a new lens and renew American ethos, Obama was able to capitalize on the affordances given to a new president and revitalize U.S. foreign relations.

Obama's commitment to direct engagement sends an important message to the military junta that reforms would be directly and publically acknowledged. Engagement also enables Obama to utilize the powers of rhetorical diplomacy by pressing U.S. interests in forums available to international leaders. Coclanis (2012) explains, "In committing to engage, the West would at once signal to Myanmar's rulers that their behavior is being positively acknowledged and also align the West more closely with the responses of virtually all of Myanmar's neighbors" (p. 90). Engagement allows Obama the occasion to persuade both the junta to reform and Burma's ally neighbors to pressure the regime to institute democratic reforms.

**Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Burma's Elections,* Press Statement, Washington, DC, November 7, 2010**

I selected this statement because it comes at a critical time in Burma as the elections held in 2010 were neither free nor fair. Barack Obama, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and Special Envoy Derek Mitchell were at the forefront of the review of the U.S.-Burma foreign policy. Direct engagement with the junta and talks with Aung San Suu Kyi were pursued, as they had with Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, to

determine how the United States should react to Burma's human rights violations. A notable change came in *how* the United States responded to the junta's human rights violations; and while the Bush administration used caustic language to demonize the regime, the Obama administration used language which expressed their displeasure, but was not insulting. The Obama administration also made better use of new media to spread their message to the international community—this was in part due to Obama's initial push to rehabilitate the image of the United States in the world community.

Immediately following the unfair elections, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (2010) offered her reaction: "The United States is deeply disappointed by today's elections in Burma. The generals who have ruled the country for the past twenty-two years missed an opportunity to begin genuine transition toward democratic governance and national reconciliation" (n.p.). Of immediate importance here is the tone and choice of words to criticize the regime. The Bush administration would have likely referred to the elections as criminals acts committed by 'thugs.' However, Clinton uses "disappointment" rather than anger—this an important distinction, for while hostility castigates the generals in a savage versus civilization dichotomy, disappointment occurs as a response to an underlying assumption that the character of the other party is inherently civilized. Clinton deftly positions the generals as part of her community, and different from the savage, who may not be tamed. Her sadness in the actions of a member of the group pulls the generals into another category of those who have committed a mistake but had the *capacity* to make the right decision. A savage may only be uncivilized—it is a term that describes the limited character of an interlocutor, rather

than the mistaken actions of a member of the group. While the use of savage denotes *difference*, "disappointment" and "missed opportunity" implicitly exposes *similarity* in the sense that the generals are civilized enough to *choose* whether to reform. In Bush's savage versus civilization dichotomy, there is no choice—an untamed ruler will *always* commit brutal action, and there is little that the ruler may do to assuage the brutality of his nature.

This departure of Bush administration terminology is important because it offers regime leaders a "way out" of the dichotomy that defined their character in previous administrations. It also positions regime leaders as members of a community who have *waited* 22 years to reform—Clinton implies that this was a *choice*. Her argument here is that the regime made a decision not to hold free and fair elections even when they had the capacity to do so; and in offering this choice to the regime, she positions her forthcoming rhetorical pressure to elevate the appeal of this *choice*. While it may have been cathartic to engage in the caustic demonization of the regime leaders as Bush, Powell, and Rice often did—their strategy was terminal in the sense that there was nothing the regime could possibly do, except unconditional surrender, to reorient their behavior. Clinton's strategy, while expressing displeasure, maintains a rhetorically sensitive and diplomatic sense of the situation: a political situation may change because people retain the capacity to change.

Clinton (2010) now hierarchically orders her critique of the flawed elections:

> The electoral process was severely flawed, precluded an inclusive, level playing field, and repressed fundamental freedoms. As a result, the elections were neither free nor fair. We were concerned by the regime's refusal to allow

> international journalists and election observers to monitor or cover the voting. Reports of intentional Internet slowdowns, voter intimidation, and fraudulent "advance voting" schemes were also very troubling. (n.p.)

Here Clinton's actor/act description terminologically positions the *electoral process* as flawed, and while the *process* has limited fundamental freedoms, this does not overtly say that regime leaders themselves repressed these freedoms. This strategy continues as her use of *reports* does not directly implicate the regime, but offers a description of the *environment* of the elections. This is a far different strategy than Powell's act/essence philosophical pairing where Internet slowdowns and voter intimidation would have been attributed to the brutality and criminal behavior of "thugs." Nowhere in this passage does Clinton link the actions of regime leaders as a way to malign their character. Instead, Clinton maintains her criticism of the flawed elections but controls the emotional response of the administration to "troubling." Clinton's choice of "troubling" is telling, as well. While Bush 3 years prior to the UN often used "outrage" to describe the feelings of the American people, Clinton continues with her use of *disappointment* to reduce a sense of regime marginalization from the world community. While "outrage" expresses anger and hostility, "troubling" expresses disconcertedness and sadness—emotions that are more easily ameliorated and would not result in a violent response, which anger logically produces by those are outraged.

Although one may argue that analyzing semantic choice goes too far in ignoring the obvious inference here that regime leaders were responsible for the flawed elections, but Clinton's word choices point to a larger shift in the *terminology* the administration uses to communicate with the regime. When asked on September 28, 2009, what had

changed in U.S. policy toward Burma, Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell (2009) responded, "As we conducted this review [of Burma policy], we recognized that ultimately, we need to change our methods but not our goals" (n.p.). Clinton's semantic choices point not to just a new way of communicating U.S. displeasure, but her rhetorical sensitivity reveals a desire to engage with the regime in order to facilitate reforms. Clinton would obviously limit the administration's ability to engage regime leaders if she uses caustic rhetoric to demonize them one week and then negotiate with them the next week. Thus, Clinton's semantic choices reveal a rhetorical diplomacy which continues to voice criticism, but in a way that her interlocutors are chastised, but not offended, and may continue to negotiate.

Clinton (2010b) now centers her policy statement to foundationally position the United States as a party whose only interest is the prosperity of the Burmese people:

> The United States stands steadfastly with the Burmese people who aspire for a peaceful, prosperous, and democratic Burma that respects human rights and the rule of law. To that end, we will continue to pursue parallel strategies of pressure and principled engagement. The United States remains open to future possibilities of dialogue with Burma's leaders. (n.p.)

Here, Clinton positions the United States as a friend to the Burmese people themselves —this is an important positional statement because it offers the needs of the Burmese people as the primary motivation for Clinton's critique of the election. Peace and prosperity are goals universally accepted within Burmese society. The implication of this strategy is a golden rule argument—where the treatment of one party should be given equally to the other party (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 2008). She implies that peace and prosperity should be offered to *all* Burmese, not just *some* Burmese. This argument

makes sense, as her message is directed to separate audiences in Burma: regime leaders and everyone else.

Clinton also continues to resist Powell's reflex to critique the actions of the regime and offer no way to come back into the good graces of the world community. Clinton's message is one of receptiveness—no lines have been crossed that may not be repaired. No actions have been committed that preclude engagement with the United States. In offering engagement to both the regime and the Burmese people, Clinton exposes a central feature of rhetorical diplomacy: a rhetorical action that offers no solution to the chastised party is inherently self-serving. Rhetorical actions should be constructed in a way that compels an interlocutor to return to the community of the greater group. Dialogue and engagement remain the only nonviolent methods of concluding a disagreement between two parties. Thus, Clinton's message is inherently nonthreatening and nonviolent, as it attempts to reveal to the regime the means by which they may rehabilitate their position with the United States and the world community.

Now Clinton (2010) moves to center Aung San Suu Kyi as the political center of gravity in Burma—the only party who has the authority to remove or impose sanctions:

> We will continue our call for respect for human rights, immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi, and dialogue toward national reconciliation. Absent progress on these core concerns, we will maintain rigorous sanctions against members of the regime and their supporters. (n.p.)

Clinton's call for the release of political prisoners, in particular Aung San Suu Kyi, articulates clearly the measures which must be undertaken in order for sanctions to be lifted. Here the goal is national reconciliation, not complete and unconditional surrender

of the regime's power. The goal is negotiation, and while this request positions the regime as a partner for progress, the future of the regime's power rests on its willingness to reconcile with its people. Clinton confers to the regime the power to grant U.S. interaction and also the power to refuse U.S. interaction with the Burmese government. Clinton skillfully shifts responsibility for continued sanctions and offers clear rewards for the government to reconcile with Aung San Suu Kyi.

Hillary Clinton's speech represents a remarkable rhetorical shift from previous administrations which refused to articulate clearly the rewards for reforms. Clinton's speech does not make an unrealistic request to dissolve regime positions of power, for dialogue implies that regime leaders will be able to have some control in how their power evolves in the future political landscape of Burma. As in the case of South Africa, it is likely that their political futures in government will end with free and fair elections, yet through their reform, the junta may be able to retain their financial power and avoid retribution. Remember that part of Clinton's mission is to keep the spotlight on the junta's continued steps toward reform. She reveals their abuses only so that she may offer them a way to reconciliation with the people that will result in their prosperity. In this way, Clinton offers a uniting principle whereby both parties, regime leaders and democracy movement leaders, may solidify their relationship.

Clinton (2010) now indicates that the United States will work with Burma's global partners to limit human rights abuses: "We will continue to work closely with the international community, including at the United Nations and in other international forums such as ASEAN, to pursue accountability and bring an end to human rights

abuses" (n.p.). The pressure here is rather clear: either the junta comes to the negotiating table, or they could lose those allies which have enabled their continued grasp on power. This strategy, at least in 2010, recognizes a *kairos*, the opportune moment, where pressure is most successfully exerted. When Clinton gave her speech, Burma was in the midst of precipitous decline economically and politically in ASEAN, for the brutal crackdown of the Saffron Revolution and the regime's handling of Cyclone Nargis caused allies to distance themselves politically and militarily from the regime. This alteration in the junta's relationship with ASEAN offers Clinton an opportune moment (*kairos*) in which to pressure Burmese leaders to reform. For while its southeast Asian alliances helped Burma limit the full force of sanctions in the past, there were obvious signs that Burma was an embarrassment to the region as Asian economies sought access to global markets.

In this final section of her statement, Clinton (2010) presents an alternative to the reality faced by the embattled regime:

> The United States is committed to helping the Burmese people through increased humanitarian assistance that targets those in desperate need and builds local capacity. Burma's leaders must come to realize—after five decades of sustained internal conflict, economic mismanagement, and international pariah status—that Burma needs a better way forward, a way that does not rely on suppression but rather strives to create a truly democratic and prosperous future for the Burmese people. (n.p.)

Clinton here works to accentuate U.S. commitment to positively respond to the reforms that the Burmese regime can take in the future. This announcement provides assurances to the regime that the U.S. will fulfill its promises, for while the leadership of Burma may lose their political positions of power because of democratization, they will be

rewarded through the overall financial improvement of their nation. This is a remarkable change in the posture of the United States, for while the Japanese government had long given humanitarian assistance to Burma, the prospect of new money flowing into Burma presents a clear financial reward for reform. Regime leaders will benefit from foreign investment because their ownership of infrastructure, mineral rights, hotels, and so forth particularly position them to take advantage of new money flowing into the country. I will address this situation at more length in the coming chapters.

I end my analysis of Clinton's statement by offering a counter-position that argues against the notion that, beyond the application of military force, there must be clear incentives for resistant interlocutors to reform their behavior. Clinton's expressed desire to expand humanitarian assistance in Burma has not been met with broad approval by democracy movement members and leaders. A common thread throughout my 2014 interviews in Burma was criticism of what they see as funneling cash into the pockets of cronies who were responsible for their brutal oppression in the first place. In my interview with Shein Win Yee (2014), she complains, "The UN is giving the crony a lot of money, why is the UN giving this crony? We want to ask: that's why we don't trust NGOs from the UN, U.S., from UNHCR" (Appendix F). Mistrust for NGOs is a serious problem for the Obama administration as the United States works to both empower free and fair elections by offering clear financial incentives and simultaneously build up public trust for the new political system.

Ms. Yee was not the only pro-democracy member to express their displeasure of the money pouring into the pockets of government cronies. Kyaw Thu (2014) told me his skepticism of the reforms the junta implemented following U.S. engagement: "They [government] are putting out headlines for peace foundation, they build national projects—but these are all headlines but if really look at it's the same old people," and "it's just for them to look like progress but actually they're lining their pockets" (Appendix C). Kyaw Thu's argument here is that really the junta has not changed— they are still the self-serving individuals who violently clung to power for decades, and while monetizing reform may offer some advantages to the foreign policies of the Clinton and Bush administrations, the changes that occur may well only exist on the surface. Thus, as I turn to my analysis of Obama's speech at Yangon University, following free and fair mid-term elections, perhaps the reforms he applauded were not as extensive as claimed.

***Remarks by President Obama at the University of Yangon,***
**Yangon, Burma, November 19, 2012**

In November 2012, Obama flew to Yangon to give his speech at Yangon University following the release of all political prisoners, free and fair midterm elections, and the dramatic political reforms which resulted in new freedoms of speech and political expression. His visit marked the first time a U.S. head of state visited Burma and marked the new relationship that his administration would have with the Burmese government. Obama's speech is imbued with a profound sense of victory that both he and the Burmese people shared upon the realization of free and fair elections, in the hope that those elections conveyed to the Burmese people themselves.

Obama (2012) begins his speech by articulating why Burma is important to the United States:

> I came here because of the beauty and diversity of your country. I have seen just earlier today the golden stupa of Shwedagon, and have been moved by the timeless idea of metta—the belief that our time on this Earth can be defined by tolerance and by love. And I know this land reaches from the crowded neighborhoods of this old city to the homes of more than 60,000 villages; from the peaks of the Himalayas, the forests of Karen State, to the banks of the Irrawady River. (n.p.)

Skillfully praising the inherent value of Burma, not only because of its geographic position within Southeast Asia, but because of its inherent cultural value, Obama's description of Burmese values helps position him as someone who is knowledgeable of the cultural pride shared by the members of his audience. Here, his strategy is to articulate the universal values of Burma in order to rhetorically position himself as a leader who shares the values of his audience. Obama's rhetorical diplomacy is consistent in his ability to find intersections where U.S. values and the values of his audience may meet, may commune according to Kenneth Burke, where Obama may create a sense of identification. Burke (1969) explains, "You persuade a man insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his" and that "you give the 'signs' of such consubstantiality by deference to an audience's 'opinions'" (p. 55). Obama's opening rhetorically positions him as someone who not only understands the proud history of Burma but someone who shares an appreciation of Burmese values.

Obama (2012) then moves to recount the story of Burma's independence from colonial rule as a way to reveal himself as a person knowledgeable of Burmese history and to identify with the struggles that the founding fathers of Burma endured:

> I came here because of my respect for this university. It was here at this school where opposition to colonial rule first took hold. It was here that Aung San edited a magazine before leading an independence movement. It was here that U Thant learned the ways of the world before guiding it at the United Nations. Here, scholarship thrived during the last century and students demanded their basic human rights. Now, your Parliament has at last passed a resolution to revitalize this university and it must reclaim its greatness, because the future of this country will be determined by the education of its youth. (n.p.)

Describing his selection of Yangon University as the site for his speech, Obama channels the credibility of Burma's founding fathers in order to elevate the necessary credibility to speak about her future political affairs. This passage would be of particular importance to Obama's audience because it is immediately comprised of university students, but it also would acknowledge the Burmese democracy movement leaders, most of whom were students at the university. Thus, Obama's recounting of Yangon university's prestigious history increases the reception of his message.

Obama (2012) rhetorically links the history of Burma to the history of the United States and create a shared sense of the past:

> I came here because of the history between our two countries. A century ago, American traders, merchants and missionaries came here to build bonds of faith and commerce and friendship. And from within these borders in World War II, our pilots flew into China and many of our troops gave their lives. Both of our nations emerged from the British Empire, and the United States was among the first countries to recognize an independent Union of Burma. We were proud to found an American Center in Rangoon and to build exchanges with schools like this one. And through decades of differences, Americans have been united in their affection for this country and its people. (n.p.)

First revealing points in the past were U.S. friendship with Burma occurred, Obama moves then to create distance from the Imperial domination that characterized Western involvement in Burma for more than a century. Obama demonstrates that the United States is not the British Empire; indeed, the United States struggled as well against colonial rule. This passage is particularly important because Obama's Burmese audience may still harbor a deep mistrust of Western intervention in their sovereign affairs. Further, the military legitimized its acquisition of power in 1962 by arguing that military rule was the only viable way to remain free from Western domination. In this way, Obama links U.S. and Burma desires for independence in order to demonstrate the inherent similarity of Burmese in Western independence history. In doing so, he substantiates U.S. involvement in Burmese politics.

Obama (2012) now lists the dramatic changes that have precipitated his arrival to Yangon University:

> When I took office as President, I sent a message to those governments who ruled by fear. I said, in my inauguration address, "We will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist." And over the last year and a half, a dramatic transition has begun, as a dictatorship of five decades has loosened its grip. Under President Thein Sein, the desire for change has been met by an agenda for reform. A civilian now leads the government, and a parliament is asserting itself. The once-outlawed National League for Democracy stood in an election, and Aung San Suu Kyi is a Member of Parliament. Hundreds of prisoners of conscience have been released, and forced labor has been banned. Preliminary cease-fires have been reached with ethnic armies, and new laws allow for a more open economy. (n.p.)

Articulating the recent reforms instituted by the Burmese government, Obama's excerpt here uses the rhetoric of legitimacy to give back to the regime a sense of inclusion into the world community. Obama rhetorically transitions the once brutal regime back into

the fold of communal legitimacy by listing the numerous dramatic ways in which it has changed. All punitive sanctions seek to coercively motivate a resistant actor to reform, yet positive rhetorical actions reinforce those reforms. Obama also elevated the relevance of those reforms for his audience. This is important because a return to the brutality of the past is always possible, and through affirming his approval of those reforms, he rhetorically diminishes the appeal of turning back to the old ways of the regime. Finally, Obama's speech elevates the inherent rewards that progress in political reform have brought internally, for more than just the reward of U.S. approval, the regime's reforms have immediately benefitted Burma beyond anything an external entity could offer by creating political stability within Burma.

Obama (2012) now offers the rewards that the United States offers to Burma in response to reforms:

> So today, I've come to keep my promise and extend the hand of friendship. America now has an Ambassador in Rangoon, sanctions have been eased, and we will help rebuild an economy that can offer opportunity for its people, and serve as an engine of growth for the world. But this remarkable journey has just begun, and has much further to go. Reforms launched from the top of society must meet the aspirations of citizens who form its foundation. The flickers of progress that we have seen must not be extinguished—they must be strengthened; they must become a shining North Star for all this nation's people. (n.p.)

This particular section of Obama's speech is remarkable because it positions the United States as a new partner in Burma's now promising future. The punitive sanctions, which had previously crippled the economy, would be lifted, and the reputation of Burma's leaders would be cleansed. Obama indicates that lifting the sanctions is only the beginning of the rewards that Burma will receive, for through American economic

assistance, the promise of access to the global economy will be fully realized. Here, Obama offers the value of American Burmese partnerships—no other foreign nation is capable of facilitating economic growth. Thus, Obama works to reinforce the critical value of sustaining the reforms already in progress, and future efforts to follow through on those reforms will be met with further reward. This particular passage is important because it positions the regime's reforms, not as a one-time only occurrence, but the beginning point from which future development may begin. Implicit in his reasoning is the recognition that the regime may have embarked on these changes only temporarily—reinforcing the value of these changes then motivates political leaders within Burma to make those reforms permanent and lasting.

In a remarkable teaching moment, Obama (2012) adopts a persona of educator as he describes to his Burmese audience the limitations of power that he himself must observe:

> Now, on the other hand, as President, I cannot just impose my will on Congress —the Congress of the United States—even though sometimes I wish I could. The legislative branch has its own powers and its own prerogatives, and so they check my power and balance my power. I appoint some of our judges, but I cannot tell them how to rule, because every person in America—from a child living in poverty to me, the President of the United States—is equal under the law. And a judge can make a determination as to whether or not I am upholding the law or breaking the law. And I am fully accountable to that law. (n.p.)

Moving through an explanation that takes him through a few minutes of his speech, Obama takes this opportunity to describe the checks and balances on all politicians who serve in United States government—regardless of their position of power. In some ways, Obama's motivation here is to shape the future political landscape of Burma by

demonstrating how the rule of law is central to American democracy. Because of the prestige and wealth that the United States retains in the global economy and culture, Obama's exordium is more likely to be respected here because the Burmese people causally link U.S. democracy to financial success. In many of my interviews, I was asked often how Burma could create a democratic society similar to that of the United States. Their reasoning was that if Burma had a similar governing structure, they could enjoy the same accumulation of wealth as America. Obama rhetorically elevates the universal application of law as a political value that all citizens and leaders in persons with power must work to protect.

Obama (2012) completes his exhortation for the rule of law by revealing the inherent rewards of the adherence to this ideal:

> And I describe our system in the United States because that's how you must reach for the future that you deserve—a future where a single prisoner of conscience is one too many. You need to reach for a future where the law is stronger than any single leader, because it's accountable to the people. You need to reach for a future where no child is made to be a soldier and no woman is exploited, and where the laws protect them even if they're vulnerable, even if they're weak; a future where national security is strengthened by a military that serves under civilians and a Constitution that guarantees that only those who are elected by the people may govern. (n.p.)

The implications of this message are clear: the travails felt throughout Burma's problematic history under military rule stem from a lack of adherence to the rule of law. Obama elevates law as a governing value that limits those with power from exploiting those who are weak. Obama reveals the rule of law as the source of equality and justice. By rhetorically positioning respect for the law, he then defines the absence of the rule of law as the underlying reason for exploitation of the weak at the hand of the powerful.

The implication here is that the regime leaders are not inherently savage, as Obama's predecessors suggested; there simply were no checks to limit the potential abuse of power that could happen in any society. Under Obama's force of logic, therefore, regime leaders are not aberrations of human nature but merely require a system of government which will enable them to be better leaders. The future that Obama describes is thus only possible through continued political reform, not just of the system of government, but of the political values that define how that government operates.

I close my analysis of Obama's speech (2012) with the following excerpt because it anticipates a possible future where disparities in wealth could easily occur:

> When your talents are unleashed, then opportunity will be created for all people. America is lifting our ban on companies doing business here, and your government has lifted restrictions on investment and taken steps to open up your economy. And now, as more wealth flows into your borders, we hope and expect that it will lift up more people. It can't just help folks at the top. It has to help everybody. And that kind of economic growth, where everybody has opportunity—if you work hard, you can succeed—that's what gets a nation moving rapidly when it comes to develop. (n.p.)

As the following chapters will reveal, my interviewees and survey respondents had significant concerns over the growing disparity of wealth within Burma. In some ways, the release of sanctions and the new tourism industry have increased the hardships of poor citizens—who are the majority. When this speech was given, it was expected that the new wealth which flowed into Burma would benefit the entire economy. And while sanctions had a universal impact on the Burmese economy, the flow of wealth would likewise have a universal improvement on Burmese living standards.

Obama's reasoning here is somewhat flawed because it neglects how wealth is accumulated by Burmese elites who are pre-positioned to take advantage of that wealth. From construction to hotels, from real estate ownership to mineral wealth rights, the advantages of the wealthy in Burma preclude any notion that trickle down economics is a realistic expectation. Indeed, the opposite is quite true—through crony capitalism and corruption, the wealthy in Burma have solidified their control over every financial sector of the Burmese economy. No one else has positioned themselves to take advantage of the reforms more than those who already were well- off prior to the reforms ever taking place. Although Obama's reasoning seems to be cogent, obvious flaws in his policy surface upon the recognition that the most wealthy in Burma are unlikely to extend the benefits of foreign investment to the poorer members of their society. As my interviews and surveys will reveal in the subsequent chapter, the plight of the poor has only increased in its severity following the lifting of U.S. and world sanctions.

While the new political freedoms certainly offer considerable promise for the future, the growing economic disparity between the upper and lower class paints a darker picture than the message of hope in Obama's Yangon speech. An overly optimistic view of how the easing of sanctions will broadly benefit the Burmese people may serve to undermine Obama's credibility and limit the reception of his speeches in future. If his audience views his speeches as political pandering without true change, Obama's rhetorical diplomacy will suffer as democracy movement leaders and members dismiss his leadership as part of the problem of income disparity in Burma.

Closing his speech, Obama (2012) indicates that the reason for America's support of Burma rests with the courage of its people and values that they share. In this way, Obama offers a uniting principle whereby both parties, Burma and the United States, may solidify their relationship. Obama uses the occasion of speaking to an international audience to reinforce U.S. commitment to positively respond to the steps that the Burmese regime can take in the future. This announcement provides assurances to the Burmese that the United States will fulfill its promises. Thus, Obama reinforces his commitment to direct engagement with Burma and promises to reward democratic reforms through his power and commitment to carry out those rewards.

Obama's (2012) Yangon University speech reveals a marked departure in U.S.-Burma relations which did little to prevent a brutal military regime from tenaciously clinging to power for decades. In the end, it was Obama's commitment to principled engagement and his extension of rewards for reform that would facilitate free and fair elections (in 2012), new freedoms of speech, and new economic opportunities for the Burmese people. The Obama administration's reluctance to castigate the regime as savages, unable to listen to reason, helped bring regime leaders to the negotiation table. Finally, Obama's commitment to the promise of reconciliation and forgiveness reveals a central feature of rhetorical diplomacy: all people have the capacity to change. Rhetorical diplomacy positions the willingness to change, not the capacity thereof, as the inherent hurdle that all diplomatic measures must overcome.

## Conclusion

Barack Obama's (2009b) speech to the Nobel forum demonstrates how national leaders mediate the contextual constraints of national and international audiences. In a rhetorical performance before a global forum, Obama becomes a representative of U.S. society and values, for national leaders inform a nation, and indeed the world, of their shared human condition. Public memory becomes an important rhetorical strategy for national leaders, for rhetors selectively publicize features of a shared collective identity and thus construct a reality that defines the past in order to legitimize the present. While public officials reconstruct the memories of the past, they construct versions of reality that coalesce with their present political efforts.

The Obama administration's speeches demonstrate how presidential speeches are intertwined with the collective memory of national identities. As advances in communication and information technologies bridge geographic and cultural distances between world communities, public memory becomes deeply connected to sustained global cooperation in security, finance, and politics. Public memory offers rhetors strategies that locate a resonate human experience, for although world communities maintain differing cultures, a capable rhetor may construct a reality that fosters coexistence. Furthermore, as an example of the international rhetorical presidency, Obama's (2009b) Nobel Peace Prize Speech explains how presidential rhetors may elevate national rhetorical power by constructing a version of reality that is constitutive of the shared values and expectations of the global community.

As a presidential rhetor, Obama has given many speeches to world audiences, yet I selected his speech in Oslo (2009b) because I believe it best communicates to the world community Obama's significant foreign policy shift away from unilateral military coercion and his move toward a more amenable policy of multilateral cooperation and engagement. Obama similarly selectively constructs a public memory that communicates a laudable history of U.S. leadership in foreign affairs for both the Oslo and Yangon University audiences. His Oslo speech also exemplifies Obama's rhetorical ability to locate the values of his listener's identity and his ability to epideictically demonstrate how those values intersect with his construction of U.S. identity. Obama seeks to communicate U.S. virtues; this element of his rhetorical diplomacy is important, for members of his diverse audience may only willingly accept U.S. international leadership if they believe that the United States is benevolent. My analyses of Obama's rhetoric in Oslo reveals how his construction of U.S. identity helps create locations where his listeners may reassess their perception of the U.S. people. By demonstrating the similarities of his listener's identity and that of his U.S. identity, Obama persuades his listeners to look beyond their differences and identify with the values of the United States.

In his Oslo speech, Obama often uses himself as an example of American virtues. As an African-American with poor beginnings, Obama reveals how he is an example of how all citizens may rise in modern U.S. society. In both speeches, Obama uses his minority status to construct a U.S. identity that values ethnic diversity, and by demonstrating these virtues, Obama argues that U.S. citizens are not inherently

prejudiced against his ethnically-diverse audience. Using his minority status becomes a powerful rhetorical strategy in Obama's communication of a U.S. identity that values diversity and seeks to cooperate with international communities. Obama also uses his ethnicity to legitimize to both audiences that his administration is very different from that of George W. Bush, for while Obama represents an ethnically diverse community of the United States, his audiences presuppose that he is more capable of appreciating cultural and ethnic diversity. In both cases, Obama uses his background to adeptly construct a U.S. identity that is not antithetical or resistant to world cultures, but believes in multilateral foreign relations with ethnically diverse world communities.

The analysis of Obama's Burma speeches presented in this chapter points to an overall sense that the rhetoric by which administrations endeavor to reach their goals matters. The speeches and statements presented in this chapter reveal a remarkable evolution in the formulation and execution of U.S. leadership in Burmese politics. Further, while this dissertation explores why rhetorical diplomacy matters, how administration officials articulate and press policies has a direct impact in the success of those goals.

This chapter also reveals that, as distasteful as engagement with bad leaders may be, leadership in the world community requires that U.S. administrations more sensitively work to form diplomatic relationships. While no nation has unlimited resources to militarily coerce all despotic regimes to reform, diplomatic engagement should be considered the most viable method of facilitating democracy. The lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan are clear: the systemic drain on the resources of the United States

threatens its financial solvency. Although rhetorical diplomacy should not be considered the panacea of nonviolent alternatives, as nations become more globally interdependent, the use of military force should become a less attractive option.

Upon his election to executive office, Barack Obama inherited a legacy of dubious U.S. interactions with the world community. No presidency exists in a vacuum, and Barack Obama's rhetorical diplomacy has sought to significantly define how it opposes the unilateral and uncooperative administrative style of the Bush administration in the international arena. Barack Obama has sought to ameliorate the tensions created by the often caustic and hegemonic rhetoric of George W. Bush, and by selecting positive features of U.S. identity, Obama has endeavored to increase the credibility of the United States abroad. This dissertation, therefore, endeavors to reveal how the construction of public memory is important to rhetorical diplomacy.

Finally, Obama's policy of direct engagement with the Burmese regime also provides the United States with the opportunity to increase its relevance and position in Asia. Holliday (2011) explains that "by adopting a Myanmar policy in harmony with Asian perspectives, rather than at variance with them, Obama can boost American engagement with the region and promote Asian responses to Asian problems" (p. 17). Obama's rhetorical sensitivity for the cultural, historical, and financial relationships between Burma and her neighbors is fundamental to the explanation of rhetorical diplomacy. Understanding the contextual constraints of ASEAN leaders, Burmese democracy movement actors, and the Burmese regime has enabled Obama to better create alliances. Obama's primary audiences for the most part were ASEAN leaders and

Burmese pro-democracy actors, yet as the junta began to reform, Obama publically applauded their leadership—in this way regime leaders have become a primary target audience. Approving of reforms, through speech, is an important facet of rhetorical diplomacy because it sends messages that the administration approves of the direction the regime has taken, and it reinforces the resilience of those reforms. Such laudatory speeches position any reversal of reform as shameful and elevates the visibility of those reforms.

Rhetorical diplomacy offers presidents significant opportunities to interact with their constituents, and in an increasingly interconnected world, how presidents communicate with world audiences shapes their influence in foreign affairs. Rhetorical diplomacy offers presidents opportunities to popularize their policy initiatives and subvert Congressional oversight, yet that power becomes complicated when considering the constraints of diverse global audiences. To a certain degree, a president constructs how the United States is perceived abroad, and how the United States is perceived is important to U.S. interests that depend on global alliances. Examining Barack Obama's rhetorical diplomacy in Burma thus becomes important for a comprehensive understanding of the rhetorical power of the United States presidency internationally.

# CHAPTER 6

## Survey and Interview Methods

Rhetorical diplomacy involves forming alliances with leaders who are particularly able to persuade a regime, resistant to U.S. leadership, to reform and adopt U.S. policy. These alliances involve internal actors, within said regime's own country, who elevate public support for policy with which the United States agrees. Other potential alliances may be formed with foreign leaders who have strong economic, political, and security ties with the regime—rhetorical diplomacy may then use these alliances to pressure the resistant regime to reform. The final element comes in *kairos*—the opportune moment to utilize these alliances to pressure regime to reform. From natural disaster to revolution to economic calamity, these opportune moments enable a president to best utilize alliances to pressure a resistant regime. While it is difficult to predict when and how often opportune moments of pressure will arise, a president must capitalize on those opportune moments.

Because speeches are primary methods a president uses to forge alliances with audiences and are central to rhetorical diplomacy, it was necessary to explore at length audience opinion of administration speeches and statements.[7] This chapter focuses on the methods I used to conduct research into audience opinions of Burma presidential speeches and statements. Audience research of this sort adds increased understanding of

[7]The methods of data collection for this proposed study necessarily involve acquiring the speeches, statements, and remarks of Barack Obama and prior presidents who interacted with the Burmese Pro-Democracy movement and the military junta of the Republic of Myanmar. I have acquired this data from White House transcripts and through published editorials.

the opinions of those whom the president seeks to persuade or seeks to defend through his speeches and statements. My method of data collection have included interviews and surveys with Burmese democracy movement leaders and members. In many ways, this dissertation provides an opportunity for those who have been silenced by the regime to reveal their opinion about the prospect of democracy in Burma. I also pursued this research because I recognized a lack of primary data in current published research of Burmese democracy movement leaders and members opinions. In this chapter, I will explore the methods I undertook in order to accumulate survey and interview data.[8]

**Early Challenges: Selecting Excerpts for Reception Analysis**

The previous chapter analyzed the speeches and statements of the past three administrations. While these speeches articulated a commitment to the defense of human rights of the Burmese people and ostensibly sought to further the prosperity of the Burmese people, I went to Burma to ascertain how those speeches and statements aligned with the opinions of democratic leaders and members. Further, even though the past three administrations sought to assist an embattled pro-democracy social movement, there is a sense that when the United States comes to the aid of others, that aid is rooted in the values and interests of the United States. Therefore, in order to truly understand the practice of rhetorical diplomacy in Burma, I found that it was necessary to survey and interview pro-democratic leaders and members in order to understand reception of presidential speeches and statements made on their behalf. In this way, I hope to include

[8]Author's note: I ask the reader to recognize that this project posed considerable danger to myself and those whom I interviewed and surveyed—I thus was required to actively respond to exigencies on the ground rather than follow a preconceived path of research.

the voices of those who have sacrificed so much for their cause, who have endured crushing poverty because of the regime, and whose voice should be included in this study.

I began crafting the survey with three goals in mind: first, I wanted to ascertain respondent opinion of important presidential speeches and statements whose subject was the Burmese pro-democracy movement. Second, I wanted to know respondents' opinions about U.S. strategies for reform in Burma. Finally, I wanted to know the possibility of reconciliation in Burma after years of brutal oppression by the military regime. This final goal is important because it may demonstrate how rhetorical diplomacy helps provides a path to lasting representative government, but that stability is predicated by the path of reconciliation in a post-regime Burma.

From the outset of this study, my premise has always been that the speeches and statements that a president makes in an international form matters because of the consistent public attention that those speeches draw. I limited my rhetorical analysis of speeches and statements to the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations because those three administrations moved to assist the Burmese pro-democracy movement more than any previous administration. In the case of Bill Clinton, there were rather few speeches and statements to draw from, for while the Clinton administration was interested in forming multilateral engagements, the rhetorical actions out of the Clinton administration, with regard to Burma, were few. Thus, I was obliged to select speeches and statements made later in his administration. In the case of George W. Bush, there were numerous speeches where Burma was referenced but few speeches solely dedicated

to rhetorical actions regarding the Burmese pro-democracy movement. Thus, in some cases I was obliged to select excerpts out of Bush's speeches in which he did expound extensively on the Burmese regime. Finally, in the case of the Obama administration there were numerous Burma speeches: Obama administration officials made frequent speeches criticizing the regime, praising reforms made by the regime, and affirming U.S. friendship with the National League for Democracy and Aung San Suu Kyi. Thus, I selected the speeches that best represented Obama's Burma rhetorical diplomacy and were made during particularly opportune moments (*kairos*) in Burma.

The Survey entitled "The Path of Democracy in Burma: The Diplomatic Presidency and Barack Obama," faced several initial hurdles even before I bought my plane ticket and headed out into the field (for a copy of the English Verison of the survey, please see Appendix I). After determining the speeches and statements of presidents and administration officials, I needed to translate the survey into Burmese. After searching for weeks for a translator, I found Mimi Oo, a medical doctor from Burma and the Vice-Chair of Community Improvement and Development Minnesota, which serves the Burmese population in Minnesota. Mimi put me in touch with Kyaw Nyo Oo and Thuzar Oo. Kyaw spent 16 years in Insein prison in Yangon for his pro-democratic activism in the 1988 revolution. Thuzar fled Burma's oppressive political and economic conditions in order to live with her uncle, Kyaw in Minnesota. For two months, my translation team worked tirelessly constructing a survey that would be both relevant and interesting to Burmese readers.

My original method model was to extensively interview members and leaders of the Burmese pro-democracy movement. I did not think that a survey would be able to garner the kind of personal information that interviews could offer. I came to this conclusion primarily because of the emotional, political, and social significance of decades of regime oppression and brutality. However, through my conversations with my dissertation co-advisor Tun Myint, and with my translator Mimi Oo, I soon learned that few people in Burma would speak candidly about their political beliefs—much less to a stranger, a Westerner, and someone who did not speak their language. Thus, I needed to construct a survey which could take the place of an interview—this meant that my survey had to be detailed and lengthy.

The survey sought to assess the respondents' level of agreement on a scale of agreement: strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, strongly agree. I used agreement because my translators argued that it could be better translated into Burmese and be more easily understood by respondents. The first part of the survey sought to assess their level of agreement with presidents, presidential political views, presidential strategies for reform, and presidential areas of concern in Burma. I selected quotes from presidential speeches and statements, which I thought were particularly relevant to the Burmese democracy movement, in order to ascertain respondent opinion about with those speeches and statements. Figure5 reveals also that respondents assessed their level of agreement instead of an abstract numerical value system, which may have been difficult for respondents to determine their level of agreement. Both Dr. Myint and Dr. Oo explained that Burmese respondents would not really know how to numerically rate

their agreement—it was thus better to construct a scale "agreement," which I can then use to analyze their respondent approval of a particular speech or statement.

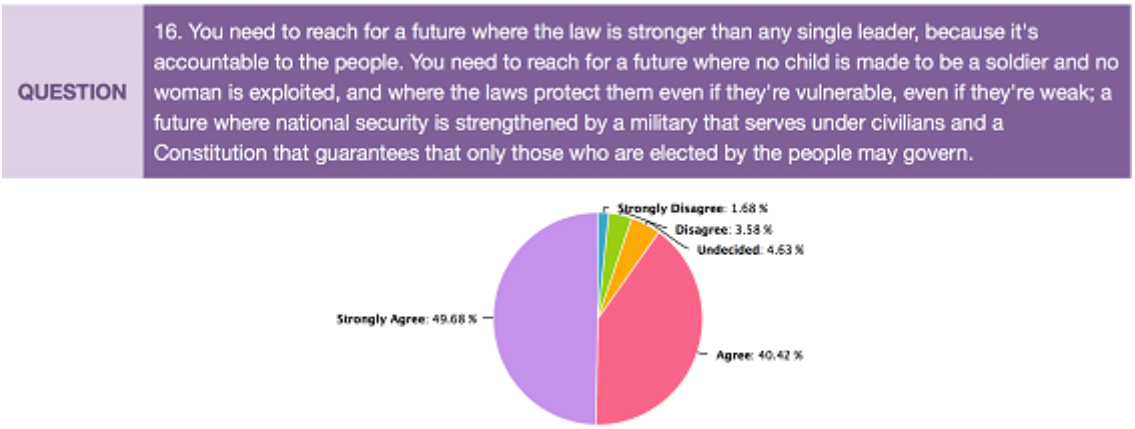


*Figure 5.* Example of survey question.

Finally, as Figure 5 also reveals, although respondents knew that all of the speeches and statements in the survey were from either Clinton, Bush, or Obama—respondents did not know which particular excerpt came from which president. Thus, I could limit their prejudice for/against a president in their assessment of a speech or statement. I believed that I could also test their affinity for a particular president versus what the president/officials actually said: for example, I might find that while a respondent may hold Clinton in high esteem, he/she may agree with Bush speeches. Because the survey was meant to take the place of the in-depth interviews, I needed to have some way to ascertain why respondents felt the particular way about a president's speech statement. Figure 6 reveals how I asked follow-up questions—in this case to question 16. These follow-up questions asked respondents qualify their previous response. I repeatedly asked follow-up multiple-choice questions which inquired why

they selected their answer: from religious views to ideological and philosophical views, respondents were given the opportunity to express the feelings associated with their level of agreement with the particular speech. I hoped this would give the survey a unique kind of depth, whereby I could understand why respondents held an opinion.

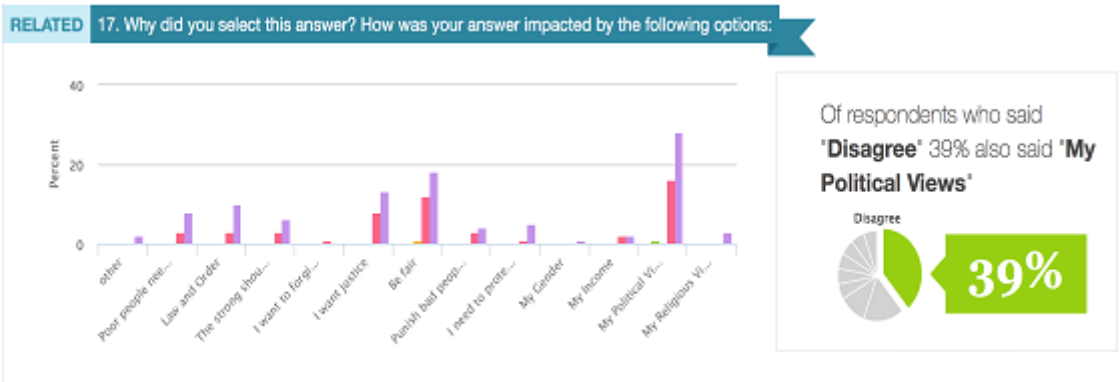


*Figure 6.* Example of comparison: Question 17 and 18.

The latter part of the survey asked respondents how the United States should help Burma. From financial investment, to trying those who committed human rights abuses in court, to forgiveness and reconciliation, respondents were asked about a future that may soon come in the wake of free and fair elections. This final part of the survey was constructed to ascertain how peace may be achieved if reforms could take place through the negotiation of the regime and pro-democracy leaders. I wanted to know whether reconciliation was possible as Burma sought to move to a new political future. These questions were important because the negotiations between the United States and the junta never addressed the issue of retribution for abuses of human rights. As in the case of post-apartheid South Africa, the process of "truth and reconciliation" is rhetorical in the sense that abusers and victims meet to verbally address past abuses in order to

move on from the past and avoid cycles of violent retaliation. Writing about the rhetoric of reconciliation, Doxtader (2008) explains, "For a beginning that turns the differences of a quarrel to unifying friendship of a settlement, it reaches for those words that write over but which do not always rights the sacrifices that echo as history's wounds" (p. 1). I felt that it was important to understand how democratic movement leaders and members, who were oppressed during their decades long struggle against the regime, are predisposed toward rhetorical reconciliation. As rhetorical diplomacy seeks nonviolent ways to press regimes to reforms, it made sense to then ascertain the possibility of peace following free and fair elections.

Finally, the last part of the survey inquired respondents' level of interest in political matters, the medium through which they receive news, their occupation, as well as socioeconomic and demographic data (Appendix I). This last part of the survey offers qualifying information that allows a researcher to categorize responses. These last questions anticipate that particular sectors of society will have common linkages between them and that their answers may point to a trend born out of demographic or socioeconomic status. In any case, these qualifying questions help a researcher notice patterns in the data stream which may then serve to explain, en mass, respondents' answers.

## Lost and Found in Translation—Constructing a Survey in Burmese

Spending a good deal of my adolescence in Jerusalem, Israel, I know firsthand the linguistic constraints of translating for the translator and the respondent. Throughout a 3-month period, I worked with my translators to construct a survey that both made sense from a Burmese perspective and would facilitate responses. Because it is common for presidential rhetors to use analogies, metaphors, and other rhetorical terms of art, translating those speeches is sometimes problematic.[9] This sort of dedication to linguistic clarity was often frustrating and tedious, but the finished product was an elegantly worded survey which captured the true essence of the speeches and statements made by three administrations. Words carry cultural meaning and are endowed with descriptive power—getting the translation right was the bedrock upon which this study would rest.[10]

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[9]My translation team discussed at length with each other over linguistic nuances embedded in a word's English versus Burmese meaning.

[10]Because Dr. Mimi Oo was educated and worked as a medical professional, her command of the Burmese language was higher than most lay persons. Dr. Oo also has experience as a Burmese-English translator for a number of hospitals in the Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN. Dr. Oo was thus an ideal translator because her command in English and Burmese as well as her extensive translation experience. Kyaw Oo Nyo suffered greatly in his 16-year prison sentence—because he was one of the student leaders in the movement, he had a better understanding of the kind of language that survey respondents would expect. Kyaw felt that this survey would both assess the opinions of his fellow Burmese pro-democracy activists and would also serve to educate those who may never have encountered presidential speeches and statements that were made about their own country. He felt a responsibility which drove him to perfect the construction of the survey. Khin Tin is a computer savvy young woman fluent in both Burmese and English. Her ability to type and edit the survey on a computer was invaluable. Khin Tin's efforts helped create a survey that was aesthetically pleasing and printable in multiple forms.

Throughout several months, a simple but beautiful document began to take shape, and, although the survey asked respondents to answer 41 questions, my translators assured me that most Burmese people would find the survey interesting enough to complete it until the end. I chose surveygizmo.com as my primary survey vehicle because I could both encrypt the survey, email the survey, and use a tablet to survey respondents. However, as I soon learned in the field that emailing the survey and using tablets was an unrealistic goal in Burma. In any case, all forms of the survey achieved a high degree of usability.

**Negotiating With University of Minnesota —Twin Cities IRB**

From the very beginning, the IRB was concerned about the safety and security of survey respondents in the field. The reviewers expressed their hesitation in approving a study which might be used by the regime to target and imprison pro-democratic members and leaders. Although the new reforms had given the Burmese public new freedoms of speech, of assembly, and so forth, the IRB recognized that surveying the members and leaders of pro-democratic organizations could be dangerous—both for me and my respondents. I was thus urged by IRB reviewers to ensure the security of those whom I chose to interview and survey.

The IRB and I initially negotiated how to preserve the anonymity of survey respondents. While the IRB insisted that I in no way retain identifying data, my co-adviser, Dr. Tun Myint demanded that respondents be able to identify themselves in order to add credibility for the results. The informed consent form (see Appendix J) reveals the negotiation of these two competing viewpoints. I suggested a compromise in

the end: respondents would have to check a box which asked "yes," "no," whether they wished to remain anonymous. The reasoning was that they would feel obliged *not* to write their names, addresses, and occupation. While I was somewhat dubious of Dr. Myint's insistence to provide a space for respondents to reveal their identity, in the end I felt that giving space to those who had been marginalized by the regime may be important. In this sense, providing a space for those to claim authorship of their opinion subverts the oppression of silence that the regime has worked so hard to create. However, the IRB was correct in their assessment that asking respondents to reveal their identity was dangerous, but we reached a compromise by constructing a consent form which gave respondents an option to write their names. In this way, I gave respondents the opportunity to retain their identity or claim ownership, knowing fully how that revelation may endanger them, and stake out a degree of agency that they may have never had previously. As I would later learn, many respondents wrote in big bold letters their names and addresses, and as one respondent told me when I cautioned that he did not have write his name down, "Young man, the government has taken everything from our people—this is our chance to have a voice."

The negotiation with the IRB was much less complicated with constructing interview questions. This is simply because the survey replaced those interviews that I sought to conduct with ordinary members of pro-democratic movements. Instead, I would conduct interviews with political leaders who were already in the public eye and who had already publicly expressed their opinions. While my questions were geared toward assessing their opinion of presidential speeches, statements, and political

strategies, my interview would not endanger their lives because they were already leaders who were in the public eye. Indeed, the IRB recognizes the political leaders who have already placed themselves in danger do not need to have their identity protected as much as members who may wish to remain anonymous. Thus, the construction of interview consent forms was much less complicated (see Appendix K).

Finally, the IRB assisted this project by elevating the notion that this could be a dangerous research project: field research in a country whose brutal regime murdered, raped, and imprisoned pro-democratic activists only for their political beliefs. Through the IRB's efforts, I worked to ensure the safety and security of those who assisted me in handing out the survey, as well as survey respondents.

**Limitations**

During the planning phases of the survey I initially staked out two research populations: members of pro-democratic organizations and Yangon University students. I selected this population to survey because I felt that their voice was particularly relevant to the reception analysis of presidential statements and speeches, after all the members of pro-democratic organizations were the very people that presidents defended. I also felt that this particular population would be more friendly and would be interested in completing a survey which asks for their opinions about presidential statements and speeches whose subject was about their movement.

From the very beginning, my team was worried both for my safety and the efficacy of me surveying Burmese citizens—regardless of political affiliations. They simply did not think that too many people would be willing to complete a survey handed

out by an English-speaking foreigner. They also felt that, due to a lack of tourism in Burma, I would draw undue attention from the authorities if I tried to hand out the survey myself.

The interview part of this study was rather complicated; I could not really plan far in advance because the Internet connections were so terrible that it was impossible to email from outside the country. Connecting via telephone also seemed impossible, as well. Thus, I relied on my translators' networks and began my search for interviewees upon my arrival in Burma. This way of working was not that unusual in Burma—the leaders of the pro-democratic movements were used to last-minute requests for interviews.

As a country made up of many ethnic groups, I felt it was necessary to capture some of the diverse points of view that may be influenced by ethnicity. Because ethnicity is a particularly touchy subject in Burma and could undermine my credibility, I did not ask respondents about their ethnic identity. Thus, I selected three major population centers: Yangon, Thangyi and Inle Lake, and Mandalay. By surveying and interviewing respondents in these regional capitals, I hoped that I could obtain more generalizable results for the population of democracy movement members. Although a broader and more expansive survey could better ensure that my respondents were broadly representative of the democracy movement population, I was constrained by both time, money, and maintaining both the security of my respondents. Also, a random sample in key population centers was simply out of the question. However, as a national social

movement whose common goal was democratization, I assert that this constraint does not reduce the reliability of the potential results.

Soon after arriving in Yangon, I met Dr. Yin Myint May, the best friend of Mimi—they were good friends in medical school and still kept in touch years later. I had spoken to Mimi months earlier, but the line was so terrible I could not make out what she said at all. In order to print my surveys and hand them out, I brought with me a portable Canon PIXMA printer—I figured, at the very least, I would be able to print about 250 surveys and get some data out of the country. When I told Mimi my plan, she was rather perplexed: "Really Aaron, I don't think anyone is going to speak to you—you're too much of a stranger and will attract way too much attention!"[11] Dr. May also cautioned, "The authorities may not want to make a big stink by throwing you in jail for conducting the survey, but they could make your life pretty miserable while you're here." In the end, May's advice led me to concluding that the only way to hand out the survey was to have leaders and members of the democratic movement hand the surveys out for me. I learned that it was impossible to for a stranger to survey a population who had just endured a long struggle against a brutal and oppressive regime.

Having others distribute a survey for me was a bit unsettling—I needed to be sure that respondents fully understood what was expected of them. Fortuitously, I had constructed a brochure which fully explained in Burmese the essence of the questionnaire: I was asking them to assess speeches and statements of the past three presidents who spoke on their behalf (see Appendix L to view this brochure in English

[11]These quotes are taken from the extensive field notes I wrote daily in Burma.

and Burmese). The brochure also revealed the importance of the study and how it would be used as part of my research. I instructed my collaborators to first hand potential respondents the brochure and allow them time to read it. I asked my surveyors to then hand respondents the informed consent form, which included a space for them to write their name and address if they so desired. I stressed to my surveyors that they were not to pressure respondents to give their name; instead, respondents were to be informed of the risks associated with completing the survey. Only after reading the consent form and brochure were respondents then given the survey.

Table 2
*Location and Surveyor*

| Location and Surveyor | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Yangon - Aaron | 0.8% | 4 |
| Yangon – Surveyor #1 | 38.6% | 186 |
| Yangon – Surveyor #2 | 14.3% | 69 |
| Yangon - Surveyor #3 | 6.2% | 30 |
| Yangon - Surveyor #4 | 1.5% | 7 |
| Inle Lake - Surveyor #5 | 8.1% | 39 |
| Thangyi - Surveyor #6 | 6.9% | 33 |
| Thangyi - Surveyor #7 | 5.0% | 24 |
| Mandalay - Surveyor #8 | 15.6% | 75 |
| Mandalay - Surveyor #9 | 3.1% | 15 |
| Total | | 482 |

Table 2 shows the percentages associated with each surveyor as well as the location of surveyor and respondents. A large percentage of respondents are located in Yangon simply because this is Burma's largest city and is where the headquarters of the NLD are located. I did not receive as many surveys in Mandalay as I had hoped, for even though it a major population center in Burma ethnic unrest made it difficult to network while I was there. The nine surveyors I collaborated with were all affiliated with

prodemocratic organizations, they were all university educated, and had a sincere desire to contribute to this study. All but three surveyors refused to accept any money for helping distribute the surveys. This partly due to a law that prohibits Burmese political organizations from accepting donations of any sort from foreign entities - NLD leaders always informed me that they could lose their license as a political organization if they accepted any money from a foreigner. Thus, I gave two dollars per completed survey for the time and effort to surveyors 1, 3 and 4 who were instrumental in helping beyond distributing the survey.

The completion rate of the surveys was fairly high - only four surveys had to altogether discarded because of respondents method of filling out the survey which was confusing (some respondents had a habit of selecting two multiple choice answers such as agree and undecided). However, there were some answers which I had to disregard because some respondents selected more than one multiple choice agree answer or failed to clearly indicate which answer they selected. I was also surprised by how many respondents chose to give write their name and, in many cases, their address and occupation. 205 respondents or 43% of all respondents chose to give their names and almost always their addresses on the box provided on the consent from. This was fairly surprising given the extensive oppression faced by members of democratic organizations in Burma. Also, the consent form, which was constructed with the guidance of University of Minnesota - Twin Cities IRB, clearly indicated the dangers associated with giving their name and discouraged respondents from giving their name.

Ultimately, the fact that most surveyors refused payment for their help, their position as leaders of pro-democratic organizations, and their level of education gives the survey results a greater degree of reliability. The high percentage of those who chose to give their name and addresses is substantive proof that surveyors were sincere in their desire to help with this research project and give voice to those who have been voiceless too long. Every surveyor was committed to the scholarly pursuit of this study: ascertaining the opinions of those associated with Burmese democratic movements.

I initially felt that a 41-question survey would limit the appeal of completing such a lengthy survey. However, most of my collaborators reported back that respondents wanted to take the survey home and read it carefully. I found that respondents either did not have the time to answer immediately because of the length of the survey, or they wanted to take the time to read the speeches and statements of past administrations in order to gain a better understanding of what was asked of them. This last point was particularly interesting—this survey became an opportunity for respondents to educate themselves about U.S./Burma foreign-policy. Due to their isolation and poverty, many Burmese were not particularly knowledgeable about the speeches and statements made by presidents. Although many of them receive their news from the BBC and VOA, my survey was likely their first encounter with the printed words of present and past presidents. Thus, it was quite normal for respondents to take a few days to complete the survey.

Thus ensued a process of approaching and interviewing leaders of the pro-democracy movement. After concluding every interview, I would then ask my

interviewees whether they would be willing to hand out surveys to their friends and members. Out of politeness, I offered to compensate my interviewees for their time—most of my interviewees declined payment and were quite happy to facilitate my research. My team of translators back home became invaluable—they provided me with contacts who gave me access to an underground network of the Burmese democracy movement. For example, one of my translators put me in touch with Kyaw Thu (as I indicated in previous chapters, Kyaw Thu is Burma's most famous actor and a renowned defender of human rights). After speaking with Kyaw Thu, he and his staff agreed to hand out as many surveys as they could—I told him that I would be back in Yangon to collect them before I left the country. In the end, there was simply no way that I could have successfully completed the study without first eliciting support from the hard-working and long-suffering democracy movement leaders.

At best, I may only describe the population of my survey respondents as being part of a "convenience sample" of pro-democracy movement members. Recall that the internal alliances formed through rhetorical diplomacy were with pro-democracy leaders and members - this was the desired survey population of this study. Because of the high degree of popularity of democratic organizations in Burma - Burmese democracy members and leaders may be highly representative of the broader Burmese population. In any case, I had no choice but to rely on others to help me: it was simply too dangerous, mostly for the respondents, for me to try to hand out surveys—even to the members of pro-democracy organizations. I simply drew too much attention to myself. Thus, I had to play the part of the tourist and businessman who was

touring Burma. I ate in amazing restaurants and drank in the lavish natural beauty of Burma and its people. While I met with leaders and handed off my surveys, I avoided as much attention as possible, for maintaining my security had less to do with my own safety and more to do with the safety of those who would put their trust in me. Even though I had gone to great lengths to ensure their anonymity, the best way to avoid scrutiny of the regime was to appear like a tourist as much as possible.

An odd complication also arose as I endeavored to print my survey. I found that my Canon PIXMA portable printer was simply not up to the task of printing hundreds of survey brochures (Appendix L), consent forms (Appendices J and K), and the survey itself (Appendix I—English not Burmese). I thus had to once again rely upon my network to guide me to a safe printing establishment where I could print several hundred of my surveys without arousing notice. Dr. May and my driver (her friend) were instrumental in guiding me to a printer and then arranging the printing of the surveys. As active members of the pro-democratic movement, they had developed a network of those they could trust—including printers. In a country under the thumb of a brutal military dictatorship, a printshop is the very hotbed of political dissent.

**Field Research in Yangon**

Although I immediately recognized the inherent complexities of conducting field research in Burma, in Yangon I soon I realized I would be unable to hand out surveys myself. I accepted my more collaborative position and did my best to interview as many leaders of the Burmese pro-democracy movement as I could. After my interviews with Kyaw Thu and U Tin Oo (Appendices C and G) in Yangon, my first interviews, I asked if

they could put me in touch with other pro-democratic leaders. Kyaw Thu was particularly helpful, going out of his way to put me in touch with most of the people I interviewed—because he was so popular and so loved by so many people, I never lacked democratic leaders to interview during my stay. I then used this network to hand out my surveys.

Time was also a significant constraint for handing out in collecting the surveys. I was forced to delegate my time to three main population centers in Burma: Yangon, Inle Lake and Thangyi, and Mandalay. These were cities I could fly in and out of and would not arouse the suspicion of authorities as they were also popular destination cities. Even though it would have been ideal to get a broader slice of the Burmese population, I was lucky to get the hundreds of surveys that I received in the end. Working my way from Yangon to Inle Lake to Thangyi to Mandalay and then retracing my steps—I lugged hundreds of surveys in my backpack.

I was struck by the nobility of the National League for democracy's cause. Stuck in a ramshackle old building next to a furniture store, the national headquarters of the NLD was more than a political center—it was the location where anyone could get help with housing, health, and education. Figure 7 reveals how the NLD offered campaign material to persuade constituents. Through DVDs, pamphlets, and magazines, the NLD has been successful in promoting its democratic message through a rhetorically sensitive marketing campaign. Even though their headquarters were a bit dilapidated, the NLD social movement seems a capable opponent to an entrenched military regime.


*Figure 7.* NLD democracy promotional material, NLD headquarters, Yangon, Burma. Photo taken June 27, 2014, by author.

**Field Research in Shan State**

The Shan are proud of the natural beauty and abundance of their land—that esteemed opinion is well deserved. After flying into Heho Airport near Inle Lake, I made my way through the muddy and bumpy roads to Inle Lake, less than an hour away. Making our way to the docks of Inle Lake, we entered the dirty backwater city of Nyaungshwe, where long boats loaded and unloaded their produce onto trucks bound for cities throughout Burma. When I finally arrived to the waterfront, I met my longboat driver who loaded by bags, full with hundreds of surveys, and whisked me away to my hotel. Skimming across the water, I marveled at the luminescent beauty of village houses

and huts perched on stilts atop the water. As we glided quickly across the water, people on the shore waved and smiled. Figure 8 reveals how the sky and water explode into a kaleidoscope of every red and orange hue imaginable.

*Figure 8.* Inle Lake at sunset, Inle Lake, Shan State, Burma. Photo taken June 28, 2014, by author.

The following morning, I showed my driver a crumpled piece of paper with the name and address of the local NLD chapter scrawled in Burmese; he nodded and I was surprised when we stopped at the Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda. Walking around the pagoda, I found my way to the NLD office and was amazed to see the familiar bright red flag with the fighting peacock in yellow. I suppose it should have come as no surprise that the NLD would find safe harbor within the gates of the pagoda, for the monks had repeatedly

joined the pro-democracy members against the regime in their cause for democracy and human rights. The chairman was not in, and a kind gentleman led me back to my boat and told my driver where to go—the driver's face lit up for a moment in recognition.

I was then guided through to the hospital, where I was informed that Dr. Tun Hlaing, who was also a doctor and chairman of the only hospital in the area, was not there but in the adjacent school and orphanage. Dr. Hlaing had been informed of my visit and was waiting in a room with a high-ceiling cooled by oscillating fans, which gave respite from the heat outdoors. Taking my card, he shook my hand warmly and smiled, "You have come a long way Mr. Aaron Little!" Throughout our interview, Dr. Hlaing joked and laughed freely, he did not seem burdened by the pressures of his responsibility and position (Appendix B). In his lifetime, Dr. Hlaing had built and founded a hospital and orphanage, built a school which gives modern education to poor youth, and led a democratic social movement.

While the following chapter will discuss the results of my interviews and surveys, Dr. Hlaing's explanation for his involvement in the pro-democracy movement is worth noting here. He endangered his life and his freedom for the same reasons he worked tirelessly to provide education and healthcare to his fellow villagers. His desire to help in all possible ways is a testament to his enduring spirit of caring—even when faced with the brutality of the regime. When I asked him if he could help hand out surveys, he did not hesitate with his reply, "When do you need them completed?" He was not willing to accept any payment for helping out—he merely wanted the voice of his fellow villagers' to be heard.

As with my collaborators in Yangon, I explained to him how to present the brochure and explained to them the relevance and purpose of the study. I then explained to him that he must offer respondents the consent form and allow them the chance to read it before deciding to complete the survey. After showing me around his school, I took my leave and told him I would be back in a few days to collect the completed surveys.

Leaving Inle Lake, I secured a driver to take me to Thaungyi, the major population center in the Shan State. My first meeting with Ko A Oo did not go quite as well as I had hoped—his translator was late, and we had to cut our meeting short. Mr. Oo ran a free funeral service for the poor, as well as a well-equipped medical and eye clinic. After describing to him the survey and how he needed to explain to respondents, I gave him 50 surveys and promised to return in a few days to collect them on my way back to Yangon and out of the country.

My last meeting in Shan State was with the Chairman of the Shan State NLD, Khun Than Lwin. I instructed the driver to wait for me and entered through rusty wrought iron gates. Several people were gathered outside waiting for me; they smiled warmly and said hello. Our little procession climbed up the steps into the main room of the house where the chairman awaited me.

Throughout my interview with Khun Than Lwin, I felt as if a bright spotlight shining on as many observers of the NLD stared at me and listened to our conversation. Khun Than Lwin smiled easily as his eyes revealed a determination to forge a new future for his country. Victor, my translator, often interjected his own thoughts and spoke

excitedly about the suffering the regime had inflicted on the Shan and Karen peoples (see Appendix A). In some ways, Chairman Lwin used my presence at NLD to help his cause, as much as I was asking him to help. One of the members videotaped the entire interview with his phone—this was particularly awkward for me, because I had little idea why I was being taped in the first place.

At the end of the interview, I asked Chairman Lwin whether he would be willing to hand out surveys to his members. He was immediately excited at the prospect, and took time to read through the brochure, consent form, and survey. As with previous interviewees, I explained how he should hand out the survey. After agreeing to hand out 100 surveys, he told me that he was impressed by the elegance of the presidential speeches and statements. Victor, our translator, asked for several surveys to use in his English teaching class—he remarked, "These are very educational; the Burmese people have never read anything like this before!" It never occurred to me that the surveys might be used in an educational setting in order to instruct students about democratic ideals.

I pause here to explain how translators were both a constraint and a benefit to my study. In Minnesota, my team painstakingly constructed a survey and brochure, which I could hand out without knowing Burmese. The brochure was colorful and clearly spelled out the purpose and relevance of the study to potential respondents. However, as I revealed earlier, I had to rely on the assistance of my interviewees— these interviewees were leaders of pro-democratic organizations. The inherent constraint of interviewing without a translator became apparent, but I was consistently amazed that

every time I showed up to an interview, a translator was there to help. I am sure that many field researchers have experienced similar constraints, but I was consistently impressed that there was always someone who was willing to act as a translator for my interviews. It was beyond my ability to arrange for a translator in advance, and I doubt any of my interviewees would have trusted an outsider to translate for them.

**Field Research in Mandalay**

As the final point in my journey through Burma, Mandalay held considerable potential for distributing a number of surveys. As a major city in the north, close to China, I assumed that this leg of my journey would be particularly fruitful. However, the ethnic tensions in this border city boiled over upon my arrival. On the night I checked into my hotel, Buddhist and Muslim groups clashed, resulting in highly publicized deaths.

After picking me up from my hotel, Ye Htein Aung, my contact in Mandalay, offered to give me a brief tour of the city. Our journey was soon blocked by a large funeral procession of a Buddhist gentleman who was murdered by a Muslim gentleman the night before. Ye Htein Aung later explained, over morning tea in a dusty teahouse, how much of the unrest had been carefully orchestrated and facilitated by the government. Figure 9 shows the unrest I saw in Mandaly. As we waited for the printers to print off 150 copies of the survey, the inherent tensions in the city became an issue to conducting my research.

by author.

While we were waiting for the printers to finish with my surveys, we made our way to the Mandalay headquarters of the NLD. It was located on the fourth floor of a rundown apartment building, not far from where the violent clashes occurred. Entering the offices of the Mandalay NLD, I was met by a political organization desperately trying how to respond diplomatically to the violence that occurred the night before. We waited patiently for Chairman Oo to see us, while members came and went in a flurry of activity. We were finally told to come back the next day to meet the chairman.

After collecting my surveys from the printers, Mr. Aung and I soon learned that the military had declared martial law and declared a curfew in Mandalay. The fear in the city was palpable; everywhere I looked people, seemed visibly concerned about a situation that threatened to boil over into violence. The contacts that I had expected to interview immediately evaporated. I felt that I was a spectator who could only look on helplessly as others tried to control the situation.

When I finally met with U Tin Htut Oo, I sensed immediately that this interview was the last thing he wanted—every 5 minutes, his phone rang to inform of a new crisis. He was understandably distracted and was more interested in getting my advice for his organization. While our interview did give me some information about his opinion of U.S. foreign policy in Burma, I recognized that I could expect little assistance with my surveys. By the time I left, days later, I received only six surveys back from the Mandalay NLD Headquarters.

Mr. Aung took it upon himself to collect the unmarked surveys from the NLD and hand them out to democracy movement members. In the end, I received over 50 surveys from Mr. Aung. I met Ye Htein Aung through my translator team back in Minnesota—he had been imprisoned up with Kyaw Nyo for over 40 years because of his involvement as a student in the 1988 uprising. He was fearless in almost every way I could describe a person: scarred by years of oppression, smiling in the face of danger, and determined to speak truth to power.

After enduring days of martial law, I left Mandalay to collect my surveys in Inle Lake. While the idea of martial law seems romantic and exciting, the reality could not be

far from the truth. I was happy to leave Mandalay behind; and retracing my steps down south, I looked forward to seeing the lush green water village of Inle Lake. I was a little disheartened at how little progress I made in Mandalay, and although my contacts had promised to hand out my surveys, I soon became filled with self-doubt of the efficacy of conducting research in Burma.

## Conclusion

By the time I left Yangon, my network gave back to me over 450 completed surveys. I was amazed at the perseverance and tenacity of my new-found friends who exceeded my expectations in how many surveys could be completed and submitted in the short time I was in Burma. I was further surprised that so many respondents had chosen not to preserve their anonymity and had chosen to list their names. I left Yangon excited and relieved by the success of my project.

When I initially mapped out my survey methods, I knew little of the realities of conducting research in a developing nation that had only recently experienced some form of freedom of speech. Most of my survey method plans had to be abandoned, as realities on the ground forced me to become more flexible. My plan to personally distribute surveys to an oppressed population was inherently flawed. It became very clear to me that trust was an underpinning constraint, which I had minimized in the planning phases of this project. Even if I was able to distribute surveys myself, doing so would have endangered my respondents and would have possibly posed a risk to my life.

In order to successfully complete this project, I realized that I must create an ever-expanding collaborative network of those who were willing to assist me with survey

distribution. My team back home had provided me with initial interview contacts coming into Burma; I then used those contacts to create a network to distribute my surveys. Using the interview process, as a way to gain trust with my interviewees, became the primary method through which I was able to distribute my surveys to their network. Thus, I spent most of my time in Burma networking and fostering trust with those who could potentially help me.

There were many aspects of my survey methods that became immediately valuable. Namely, the colorful brochure which articulately and clearly described the purpose and relevance of the survey—in a language that was easily understood by respondents (Appendix L). Spending months of preparation on crafting this brochure and consent form helped my collaborators explain to potential respondents the relevance of my project. Without this important brochure a consent form, I doubt I would have been received as many completed surveys.

I was also surprised by the many positive responses concerning the content of the survey itself—many of my collaborators later informed me that respondents were intrigued and interested in the statements and speeches I had selected. While the months spent translating and working on the survey was often frustrating and tedious, that hard work later paid off in dividends. My team's dedication in crafting a readable and understandable survey made my field research easier in Burma.

Although I had previously conducted surveys in the United States, this project taught me that field research in a country like Burma must be flexible and must bend to the realities on the ground. I learned that rigidly adhering to preconceived methods of

surveying not only endangered the project, but could possibly endanger myself and others. My experiences in Burma left an indelible impression of the hope and perseverance of those who struggle against oppression. The methods of surveying and interviewing in Burma taught me invaluable lessons about being flexible, friendly, and, above all, patient. This realization became immediately true as I struggled to conduct field research in a country undergoing so many social and political changes.

# CHAPTER 7

## Results and Analysis of Survey and Interview Data

The purpose of this chapter is to reveal the data collected through surveys distributed in Yangon, Inle Lake, Thaungyi, and Mandalay. This study seeks to understand how rhetorical diplomacy works to form alliances in order to pressure resistant regimes to reform. Among the ways a president forges those alliances is by persuading audiences through speeches and statements. This dissertation would be incomplete without conducting audience reception analysis of the speeches and statements that a president gives as part of an alliance-building effort.

This dissertation carries with it a respect for the opinions of indigenous voices—voices who have been consistently marginalized during their history under British colonial power and subsequent oppression by the military regime. Murdered, imprisoned, or sentenced to house arrest, the regime has worked tirelessly to silence democracy movement leaders and members. When I initially decided to research rhetorical diplomacy, the prospect of only analyzing presidential speeches without giving a space for those marginalized voices not only seemed unethical, it would offer an incomplete analysis of rhetorical diplomacy in Burma.

Going to Burma to conduct surveys and interviews offered my study a cultural complexity which could not be otherwise gained had I pursued my research in the United States. Holliday (2011) asserts, "On the one hand, few outsiders make much effort to gauge grassroots feelings among regular citizens, community leaders, civil society groups, business organizations," and "on the other, many foreigners nevertheless take

entrenched policy positions on no more than limited information" (p. 106). If U.S. leaders sincerely desire to assist pro-democratic organizations within Burma, or in any country for that matter, they should endeavor to ascertain what sort of assistance those organizations want. Thus, this survey provides a platform through which the voices of the people reveal their opinion of presidential speeches that were made about their cause—speeches which pressured regime leaders to enact certain reforms on their behalf.

A note about the results—while this issue will be further discussed in the discussion and limitations in Chapter 8, it is prudent to pause here and expound about the cultural differences which impinge upon a surveyor in Burma. Both Dr. Mimi Oo and Professor Tun Myint argued, during the survey planning phase, that Burmese prefer not to make extreme judgments about a particular issue. While the survey was better than interviewing respondents, nevertheless, even in a survey, Burmese people would be unlikely to take strong positions on any particular issue. Dr. Oo and Professor Myint argued that those who did decide to take strong positions most likely have particularly strong political positions in general, which would then inform their survey answers; but most respondents would avoid committing to an extreme. Professor Myint and Dr. Oo both claimed that asking respondents to take a "strong" position is simply out of the question in Burmese society and culture. However, when I suggested that numerical categories could ameliorate this predilection, they both argued that a numerical rating system was too arbitrary—respondents would have even greater difficulty in selecting an

answer which reflected their views.[12] Thus, the consistency of "disagree" or "agree" answer does not point to indecision, but may point to a culturally-based refusal to take a severe position on any particular political point-of-view.

I have taken time here to point out the cultural sensibilities of my respondents because this understanding does constitute an important constraint that U.S. researchers must understand. While U.S. respondents may be culturally predisposed to offering definitive and extreme points of view, this is a culturally taboo act in many Asian societies where bluntness and candor are discouraged. In his critique of my dissertation, Dr. Tun Myint argued that the issues involve expressing an opinion in a straightforward way versus expressing opinion in a very extreme way—Burmese people like straightforward.[13] Viewing the results of this survey through this lens, therefore, shapes how one should interpret survey results.

Finally, the disparity in the numbers of reported answers needs to be explained. Readers may notice that the numbers of responses entered vary with some questions. (See Appendix M to view the survey results in its entirety.) This was another unfortunate instance where respondents would choose both "agree" and "disagree" or chose not answer the question altogether. This again points to a cultural anxiety about definitively answering a pointed question, which asked them to assess the actions of an elite—they may have strongly agreed, but did not want to seem disrespectful and selected multiple

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[12]In addition to the arbitrariness of a numerical scale, numerology and similar superstitions are intertwined with Burmese culture and would thus make certain numbers "unlucky" and would be avoided.

[13]This quote is taken from my notes during a face-to-face meeting.

answers. Because this survey was distributed in paper form, I could not limit this behavior. Thus, I excluded particular answers that did this, but decided not to exclude those respondents altogether. I did not exclude a respondent's survey if they did not completely fill out the survey or made mistakes. I did this because I feel there should be some flexibility in the survey design to be sensitive to the cultural sensibilities of Burmese respondents. Excluding a survey altogether would mean marginalizing a person's voice because they are unfamiliar or resistant to U.S.-held values. Thus, I have included the surveys of respondents who incorrectly answered some questions (chose several answers when they were asked to select one answer) and left certain questions blank. I did, however, exclude those answers which were incorrectly filled out or missing altogether.[14] In this way I hope I have created a balance between researcher integrity and cultural sensitivity.

**Opinions of Presidents and Political Views**

Table 3 reveals the overall opinion of presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama. The first questions in the survey asked respondents to assess presidential political views, but before I asked for this assessment, I felt it was important to provide a benchmark of approval of a particular president. Here the results are not particularly surprising, for while Barack Obama oversaw the recent reforms in Burma, he benefitted significantly from those successes. I asked this question in order to

[14]Either they selected more than one answer on a multiple choice question: agree and undecided for example. Some respondents seemed unsure about their answer and put their check mark between agree/disagree and strongly agree/disagree. I had to disregard these answers because it was impossible to determine which multiple choice box they selected. Perhaps respondents sought an "in-between" answer.

differentiate between respondents' approval of presidents and their level of agreement with a president's speeches and statements.[15]

Table 3
*Which President Represents Your Political Values?*

| Value | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Bill Clinton | 10.2 | 44 |
| George W. Bush | 8.4 | 36 |
| Barack Obama | 81.4 | 350 |
| Total | | 430 |

Table 4 reveals that of respondents who selected Barack Obama as representing their political values (see Table32), 155 agreed with the excerpt from his Yangon University speech (2012)—recall that the survey did not reveal to respondents the identity of speaker/writer of the speech/statement. Over half of those who felt Obama represented their political interests also agreed with his political views. What is interesting, however, is that the majority of those who disagreed with Obama's argument here also felt that Obama best represented their political values (Table 3). A minority of those who selected Obama as representative of their political views also disagree with his speech, but a majority of Obama supporters agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

On the surface, the high levels of agreement with Obama's speech seem to correlate with respondent answers in Table 4. Figure 10 and Table 4 reveal that these results mistakenly elevate the perception of a correlation between Obama's speech and

[15]When asked to rate their opinion of a speech/statement, respondents did not know the identity of the administration official who gave that speech or statement.

Table 4
*Comparison Between Opinions of Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush and Opinion of President Barack Obama's University of Yangon Speech*[a]

And now, as more wealth flows into your borders, we hope and expect that it will lift up more people. It can't just help folks at the top. It has to help everybody. And that kind of economic growth, where everybody has opportunity—if you work hard, you can succeed—that's what gets a nation moving rapidly when it comes to develop. *Remarks by President Obama at the University of Yangon,* Rangoon, Burma, November 19, 2012.

| Which U.S. president best represents your political values? | 1 Strongly disagree | 2 Disagree | 3 Undecided | 4 Agree | 5 Strongly agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bill Clinton | 8 | 8 | 3 | 17 | 7 |
| George W. Bush | 0 | 7 | 7 | 16 | 5 |
| Barack Obama | 10 | 43 | 58 | 155 | 77 |
| Total | 18 | 58 | 68 | 188 | 89 |

[a]Data presented in numbers of respondents.

whether respondents feel he represents their political views. Turning to question 3, which asks respondents their opinion of George W. Bush, we find this complication.

Looking at affiliation of George W. Bush's political views reveals a striking result: only 8% of respondents indicated that Bush best represented their political views; but Table 4 shows that an overwhelming majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with Bush's speech. How could a majority of respondents select Obama as representative of their political views and then overwhelmingly agree and strongly agree with Bush's speech? Obama had elevated rhetorical diplomacy in the sense that as he is more rhetorically sensitive than Bush and better at forming alliances with world leaders.

That sensitivity is shown through his speeches and statements, so why did respondents still agree with Bush's speech—which is arguably fairly caustic?

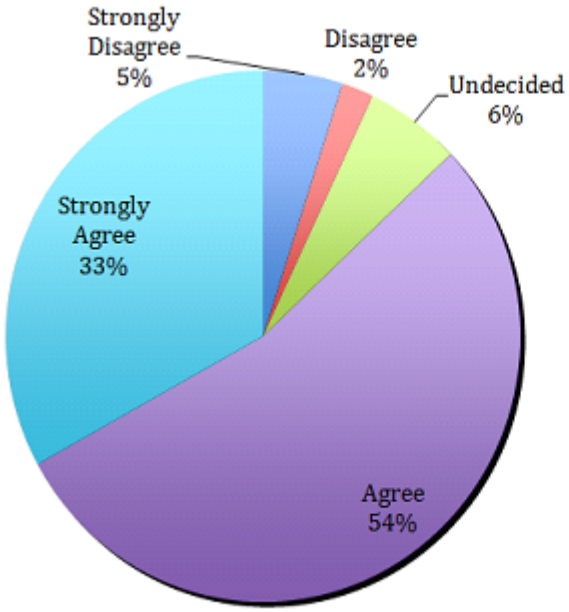



*Figure 10.* Opinion of George W. Bush 2005 State of the Union Address.

While only 8% of respondents chose Bush as being the most representative of their political views (see Table 3), many respondents agreed with Bush's characterization of the junta (Table 5). There are a few simple answers here: Bush's speech may not have been conducive to rhetorical diplomacy with the regime, but his speech resonated with democratic respondents, many of whom were oppressed by the regime. Respondents were not thinking of the geo-political significance of the speech as they considered Bush's characterization of the regime. Bush may not have given a speech that assisted his rhetorical diplomacy to form alliances, but perhaps that did not matter to respondents. Bush's characterization simply may have appealed to those who are oppressed and

similarly agree with Bush's description of Burma's oppressive dictators. The efficacy of diplomacy requires that a head of state refrain from such language, because it limits the extent to which rhetorical diplomacy may achieve non-violent solutions to issues. Bush may have located an audience who agreed with his caustic rhetoric, yet his lack of rhetoric sensitivity would limit his ability to form the necessary alliances to pressure regime leaders to reform. Rhetorical diplomacy chooses the path which saves the most lives *while* finding rhetorically sensitive ways that assist an embattled democracy social movement.

Table 5
*Opinion of George W. Bush 2005 State of the Union Address*

That is one of the main differences between us and our enemies. They seek to impose and expand an empire of oppression, in which a tiny group of brutal, self-appointed rulers control every aspect of every life. Our aim is to build and preserve a community of free and independent nations, with governments that answer to their citizens and reflect their own cultures. President Bush, 2005, *State of the Union Address.*

| Value | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly disagree | 4.6 | 22 |
| Disagree | 2.3 | 11 |
| Undecided | 6.1 | 29 |
| Agree | 54.0 | 257 |
| Strongly agree | 33.0 | 157 |
| Total | | 476 |

Perplexing is the fact that while respondents agree with Bush's speech, they disagree with his political views. Looking at the comparison data from the two sets in

Table 6 reveals those who answered *both questions correctly*.[16] Here, the results show that *of* the respondents who indicated that Obama best represented their political views, 200 respondents agreed with George W. Bush's speech. Further perplexing is that of those who selected George W. Bush (2005) as representative of their political values, only twelve of those agree with the excerpt from his state of the union speech. What accounts for these results?

In the coming sections, the data will reveal that there is a difference between agreeing with a president's argument and with the overall *assessment* of the efficacy of a president. On the surface it looks as though respondents are confused—how could 82% of respondents overwhelmingly select Obama as their favorite president but then agree

Table 6
*Numerical Comparison Between Bush 2005 State of the Union and Which President Best Represents Respondent Political Views*

That is one of the main differences between us and our enemies. They seek to impose and expand an empire of oppression, in which a tiny group of brutal, self-appointed rulers control every aspect of every life. Our aim is to build and preserve a community of free and independent nations, with governments that answer to their citizens and reflect their own cultures. President Bush, 2005, *State of the Union Address.*

| Which U.S. president best represents your political values? | 1 Strongly disagree | 2 Disagree | 3 Undecided | 4 Agree | 5 Strongly agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bill Clinton | 7 | 4 | 2 | 17 | 13 |
| George W. Bush | 2 | 2 | 5 | 12 | 14 |
| Barack Obama | 9 | 4 | 21 | 200 | 110 |
| Total | 18 | 10 | 28 | 229 | 137 |

[16]As I indicated earlier, some respondents had a habit of answering both agree and disagree and had to be eliminated—this accounts for the difference in numerically presented responses.

with Bush's argument in Table 5? One's affiliation with a president may have more to do with their assessment of how that president was able to succeed overall in achieving the goals of the movement. With Bush, as we will see with Clinton, the people simply did not see any changes on the ground during his presidency. It is too much to ask respondents to determine whether a particular president's rhetorical diplomacy is most effective when communicated through a speech. People judge a president, at least in this survey, based upon how much change occurred in their lives during that administration. If Obama fails to deliver on the promise of free and fair elections in 2015, one could similarly expect that his approval rating would fall.

The data show that there were not huge differences in agreement of Clinton, Bush, and Obama speeches and statements (Appendix M). Clearly, the brutal actions of the regime certainly positioned many within the movement to agree with Bush's blunt demonization of the military junta. Let us not forget that the junta committed human rights abuses, which would certainly merit their demonization, but the work of rhetorical diplomacy is not only to elicit alliances from social movement leaders and members—alliances must also be formed with regime allies who may pressure the regime. Rhetorical diplomacy ultimately utilizes those alliances that take advantage of the most opportune moment of influence (*kairos*). While one may agree with Bush's rather caustic description of the regime, his overall ability to achieve what the Burmese pro- democracy movement wanted was lacking. Members and leaders in pro-democratic movements may not immediately recognize the connection between rhetorical diplomacy and a president's rhetorical sensitivity (or lack thereof) and the resultant achievement of

political aims. Simply said: the pathos of demonizing the regime appeals to democracy movement members, but regime leaders may not be willing to sit at the negotiation table with a president who actively demonizes them in the public media.

**Political Views of Secretaries of State**

Secretaries of State play a significant factor in the relations between the United States and other nations, and because they represent the foreign policies of an administration, they are more likely to be at the forefront of engagement as presidents balance their domestic and foreign obligations. I asked respondents to assess the speeches and statements of Secretaries of State Madeleine Albright (Clinton administration), Condoleezza Rice (Bush administration), and Hillary Clinton (Obama administration). Looking at the results side by side, they seem to diverge more considerably between Hillary Clinton and Condoleezza Rice. This divergence may have more to with Clinton's understanding of the situation on the ground. She ultimately may have given speeches which were more immediately relevant to respondents. Holliday (2011) asserts "generalized inattention is a major problem because it both feeds ignorance and reduces credibility and legitimacy," for "few policymakers have much detailed understanding of conditions on the ground inside Myanmar, options for change, or popular expectations of external engagement" (p. 121). Holliday's complaint is particularly relevant in the assessment of Secretaries of State who lead the State Department's focus on particular foreign issues.

In this section, there was not much divergence between agreement of the speeches made by the three secretaries of state (Appendix M). A better way to

understand these results is by comparing the results together—the most striking differences arise from comparing the answers of those who agreed with Clinton and those who agreed Rice. I generated this comparison through Survey Gizmo's tool which enable surveyors to compare a particular respondent's answer on one question with the same respondent's answer on another question. Survey Gizmo provides results on an X and Y axis table—I exported that data to an excel spread sheet to generate charts and tables. Comparing respondents' answers helps explain how respondents agreed with Hillary Clinton but then had different answers when assessing their agreement with Condoleezza Rice. This helps test my assertion that respondents broadly agreed with administration speeches and statements but assessed a president through their sense of changes on the ground.

Table 7 reveals the intersection of agreement among those who agreed with Clinton's speech with Rice's speech: almost 80% of respondents agreed with both speeches. The convergence of these results does seem to reinforce my earlier explanation that democracy movement leaders and members broadly agree with the speeches and statements from both administrations. Respondents also may not view the rhetoric of the two Secretaries of State as being particularly different from each.

Table 7
*Comparison of Secretary of State Rice and Clinton Speeches*

| | The United States is committed to helping the Burmese people through increased humanitarian assistance that targets those in desperate need and builds local capacity. Burma's leaders must come to realize—after five decades of sustained internal conflict, economic mismanagement, and international pariah status—that Burma needs a better way forward, a way that does not rely on suppression but rather strives to create a truly democratic and prosperous future for the Burmese people. (Clinton) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The United States has been a Pacific nation for nearly two centuries. And to this day, our unfailing support for Asia's success remains rooted in the same basic principles: the promotion of peace and the rule of law; freedom of commerce and exchange and support for the just aspirations of all people. (Rice) | 1 (%) | 2 (%) | 3 (%) | 4 (%) | 5 (%) |
| 1—Strongly agree | 57.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.7 | 0.0 |
| 2—Disagree | 14.3 | 23.1 | 8.7 | 2.6 | 4.4 |
| 3—Undecided | 0.0 | 38.5 | 52.2 | 5.6 | 3.8 |
| 4—Agree | 14.3 | 30.8 | 30.4 | 79.9 | 42.1 |
| 5—Strongly agree | 14.3 | 7.7 | 8.7 | 11.2 | 49.7 |

Respondents seem to largely deviate in the disagree and strongly agree categories. The convergence of those who *strongly agree* is immediately apparent: only 49.7% of those who strongly agreed with Clinton strongly agreed with Rice. This points more to the differences in opinions of those who have strongly held positions. Remember, many respondents may have been unwilling to choose "strongly agree" as an acceptable answer because of their cultural predilections.

The deviation between those who strongly agree with Clinton with those who strongly agree with Rice is rather telling—strong agreement seems to be the point at which many respondents differ from each other. Given the cultural resistance to selecting "strongly agree/disagree," these respondents may have particularly robust political views and may see obvious differences between the two rhetorical styles that may be too nuanced for other respondents. As in the case of political movements elsewhere, intense adherence to a political ideology on either side of a political debate is where many populations may deviate with each other.

By far the median of most respondent answers of speeches and statements throughout the survey were centered squarely on *agree* (Appendix M). This trend is largely consistent throughout the survey: most respondents rarely picked "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree." This result reinforces Dr. Oo and Professor Myint's assertion that Burmese are unlikely to express extreme opinions in a survey. For many respondents, the differences between Clinton and Rice's statements may be too nuanced. While Clinton reveals the United States as a committed partner with the Burmese people, she follows her statement by revealing the differences between democracy and despotic regimes. Rice's argument that the United States, as a Pacific nation, has values which are inherently similar to other Pacific nations. The similarity of their statements, from the perspective of Burmese respondents, may then explain the convergence of 80% of those who "agree" with Clinton also "agree" with Rice.

## Strategies for Reform

Given the inherent constraints of asking respondents to select a culturally-loaded answer, I devised Part 2 of the survey in a way that allows respondents to select an answer. I then asked multiple-choice follow-up questions that inquired why respondents selected their answer. In this section, I will explore the speeches and statements of administration officials who articulated a policy strategy to press regime leaders to institute democratic reforms. The questions here follow two formats: selection of a speech and follow-up assessment of that speech.

Instead of presenting a scale of agreement, I asked respondents to merely choose *one* speech that they felt was the best strategy for facilitating reform in Burma. I excluded respondents from this result if they selected more than one speech. Selecting more than one statement would distort the results and make it impossible to definitively point to a particular strategy as representative of respondent opinions. Perhaps cultural taboos associated with overt critique may have constrained their ability to select *one* statement.

The data revealed in Table 8 show an overwhelming majority of respondents agree with the Obama administration's foreign-policy of principled engagement. Here, the question did not center on the status or position of the political official, but offered an excerpt that best articulated the overall policy strategy of the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations. Ambassador Albright (who was the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. when she gave this speech) and Secretary of State Clinton were central in formulating a forming policy strategy toward Burma—their articulation here best

Table 8
*Administration Strategy for Reform*

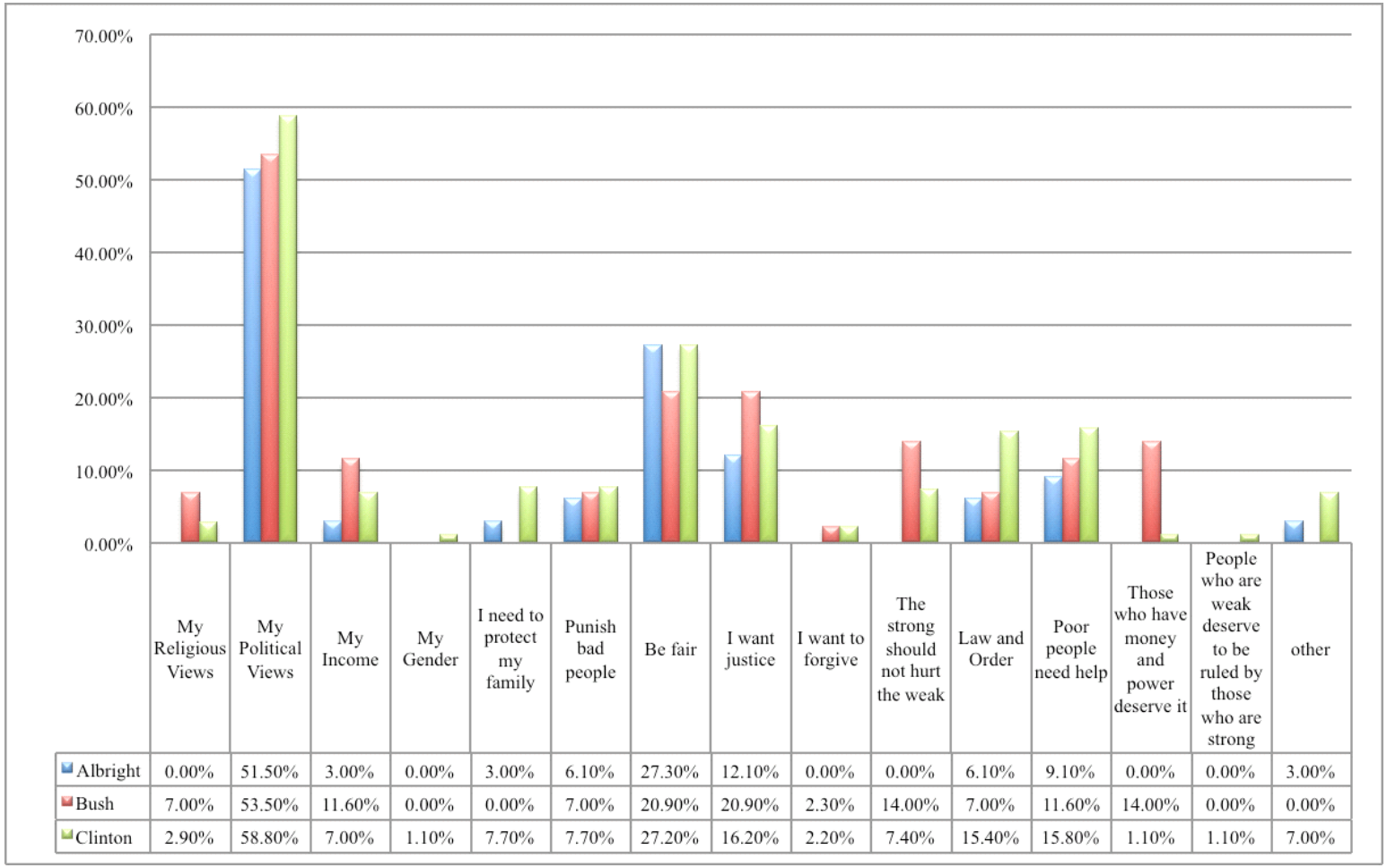
| Choose the statement by an American official that you think is the best strategy for creating reform in Myanmar. | | |
|---|---|---|
| Value | Percent | Count |
| We need to see fundamental progress towards democracy and respect for human rights before relations with the USA could be improved or the USA would consider lifting the ban on World Bank loans to Burma imposed since 1988. **Albright** | 9.4 | 33 |
| The United States will tighten economic sanctions on the leaders of the regime and their financial backers. We will impose an expanded visa ban on those responsible for the most egregious violations of human rights, as well as their family members. **Bush** | 12.3 | 43 |
| The United States stands steadfastly with the Burmese people who aspire for a peaceful, prosperous, and democratic Burma that respects human rights and the rule of law. To that end, we will continue to pursue parallel strategies of pressure and principled engagement. The United States remains open to future possibilities of dialogue with Burma's leaders. **Clinton** | 78.4 | 275 |
| Total | | 351 |

represented the foreign policy calculus of their administrations. While Bush administration Secretaries of State Condoleezza Rice and Colin Powell certainly had opinions about Burma, I felt that Bush's statement here best represented the strategy his administration took toward Burma.

Clinton's overall strategy was to use sanctions to compel the regime to capitulate to his demands, yet he offered no reward other than the lifting of those sanctions. Bush's overall strategy was to implement further sanctions and demonize the regime without offering, at least in public, any reward whatsoever for acquiescing to his demands—his strategy seemed more punitive and less built on a particular political solution. Obama's

overall strategy was to avoid caustic rhetoric while threatening the regime with further sanctions, but he offered clear rewards beyond the removal of sanctions in exchange for democratic reforms. These three very different political strategies had obvious consequences on how the administration engaged the military junta. Table 7 reveals that respondents agreed with Hillary Clinton's more rhetorically sensitive strategy. While Bush and Albright centered their strategy on punishment, Hillary Clinton's strategy centered on defense of human rights and engagement.

"Strategy for Reform" was a particularly important question for my analysis of rhetorical diplomacy. The results clearly reveal that Hillary Clinton's rhetorically sensitive statement was viewed as the best strategy which could facilitate reform. While rhetorical diplomacy seeks to build alliances for the purpose of pressuring a resistant regime—the influence of rhetorical diplomacy is only actualized upon some sort of engagement with a regime. A regime must be guided out of their caustic relationship with the U.S., world community, and their own people. While all three rhetors position human rights as central to reform—only Clinton's rhetorical diplomacy indicates how the United States may facilitate reform in Burma. Figure 11 correlates those results through categories that I felt were factors most likely to motivate respondents to choose the strategy that best agreed with their views. Unsurprisingly, a majority of respondents chose "My Political Views" as the primary motivating factor for their selection of the




| | My Religious Views | My Political Views | My Income | My Gender | I need to protect my family | Punish bad people | Be fair | I want justice | I want to forgive | The strong should not hurt the weak | Law and Order | Poor people need help | Those who have money and power deserve it | People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong | other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Albright | 0.00% | 51.50% | 3.00% | 0.00% | 3.00% | 6.10% | 27.30% | 12.10% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 6.10% | 9.10% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 3.00% |
| Bush | 7.00% | 53.50% | 11.60% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 7.00% | 20.90% | 20.90% | 2.30% | 14.00% | 7.00% | 11.60% | 14.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Clinton | 2.90% | 58.80% | 7.00% | 1.10% | 7.70% | 7.70% | 27.20% | 16.20% | 2.20% | 7.40% | 15.40% | 15.80% | 1.10% | 1.10% | 7.00% |

*Figure 11.* Comparison chart: Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following options? (Refers to answers in Table 7.)

Clinton, Bush, or Obama administration's strategy. Note that the numbers here correlate the individual responses given for each strategy. For example, 27.2% of those who selected Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's statement gave "Be Fair" as their reason (Figure 11). Because a majority of respondents chose Clinton's strategy statement in Table 8, the real numbers of respondents who selected their reasons are far different. I decided to reveal the data through percentages instead of numbers of respondents because this chart should be viewed in tandem with Table 8 (which presented data in percentages). There should thus be an understanding that those who selected Clinton's statement have a numerical majority in Table 8.

Figure 11 also reveals that 27% (Albright), 21% (Bush), and 27% (H. Clinton) of respondents chose "be fair" as a reason for their selection. Those who favor Secretary of State Albright's more punitive strategy may view fairness differently from those who chose Secretary of State Clinton's more rhetorically sensitive strategy. Fairness for Albright's supporters may mean that the junta should exhibit more fairness to their own people. Clinton supporters may view engaging the junta as a foreign policy strategy that is both fair to regime leaders and democracy movement leaders. I found it difficult to explain, without falling into the trap of pure speculation, how fairness was a motivating factor for respondent answers. Perhaps it was ill-advised to use this term in the first place, for fairness is a term imbued with cultural norms and values that I simply may not be able to unpack as a foreign researcher.

Justice may not be as nuanced as fairness, in this respect, as respondents look to the legal system for justice; yet, whether and how justice is carried out for Burmese

respondents is still nuanced. My interview with Khun Than Lwin (2014), Chairman of the Shan State National League for Democracy, sheds some light on what justice and fairness may mean for respondents:

> At the moment of President Obama speeches, in that speech he said 'equal right to everybody whether you are poor or rich.' I listened to this carefully—no one is above the law. Above the law there are so many generals who are corrupt people. Equal rights is just a dream, we are still living in a dreamworld. There are no protections of the law. (Appendix A)

Here, Chairman Lwin positions equal rights and equal protections under the law as aspects of justice. Perhaps respondents indicated that "fairness" was their reason for selecting Ambassador Albright's and Secretary of State Clinton's speeches because they both referenced human rights in the context of democracy and the rule of law. While Bush's strategy was to indicate how he would punish the regime through sanctions, Albright and Clinton explained how human rights are central to democracy. Chairman Lwin claims that equality is rooted in the equal application of justice—those who have power should not escape justice merely because of their wealth and status. Thus fairness and justice, perhaps, have more to do with equality, rather than a desire for retribution. Perhaps this explains why Clinton's strategy was more appealing: her rhetorical sensitivity for Burmese concerns for equal rights (Table 8).

While the rhetoric of Bush administration officials was rather caustic in their demonization of the regime, there was broad-based appeal for Bush administration speeches, which came to the defense of democratic movement leader Aung San Suu Kyi. This could be explained because of the enormous popularity of "the lady," who

has captivated the attention of world leaders through her message of democracy and nonviolence.

In my earlier rhetorical analysis of Secretary of State Colin Powell's published statement, I criticized his repeated demonization of the Burmese regime. What is striking about the results in Table 9 and Figure 12 is that many respondents strongly agreed with Powell's caustic defense of Aung San Suu Kyi—the fact that "strongly agree" received the majority is telling, given the cultural predilection against such a selection. While Powell's foreign-policy strategy may have been problematic in achieving a political resolution to the oppression of pro-democratic leaders and members, not surprisingly his defense of Aung San Suu Kyi resonated strongly with respondents. Only 6% of respondents disagreed with Powell, with 2% strongly disagreeing with Powell—these outliers may have differences of political opinions with Aung San Suu Kyi and not necessarily with Powell's rhetoric. I placed Powell's statement in the "strategy for reform" because it encapsulates how the Bush administration positioned Aung San Suu Kyi as the rightful leader of Burma as a way to justify sanctions. In my 2014 interview with Shin Win Yee (2014), a member of the democracy movement, she explains the central figure of Aung San Suu Kyi in Burmese democratic efforts:

> The government [is] making the conflict. Daw Aung Suu Kyi, you know, she is having some problems—she is defending human rights. Most of our people's religion is Buddhist, but Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is standing not [as a Buddhist], she is standing for the people. (Appendix F)

Table 9

*Opinion of Colin Powell's 2003 Wall Street Journal Article, "It's Time to Turn the Tables on Burma's Thugs"*

By attacking Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters, the Burmese junta has finally and definitively rejected the efforts of the outside world to bring Burma back into the international community. Indeed, their refusal of the work of Ambassador Razali and of the rights of Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters could not be clearer. Our response must be equally clear if the thugs who now rule Burma are to understand that their failure to restore democracy will only bring more and more pressure against them and their supporters.

| Value | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly disagree | 2.1 | 10 |
| Disagree | 6.4 | 30 |
| Undecided | 7.2 | 34 |
| Agree | 40.2 | 189 |
| Strongly agree | 44.0 | 207 |
| Total | | 470 |

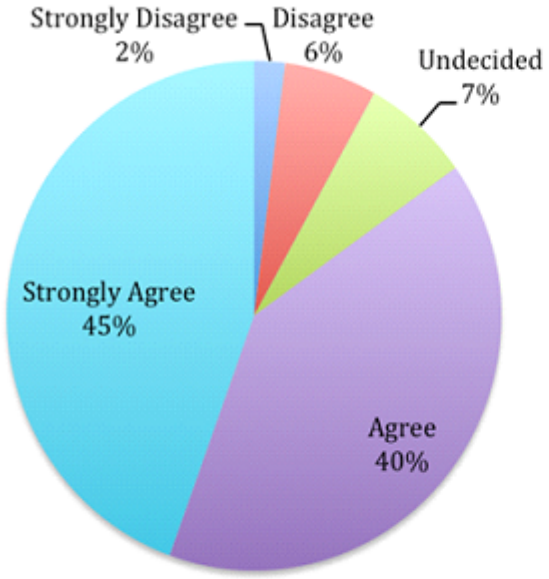



*Figure 12.* Opinion of Colin Powell's 2003 *Wall Street Journal* article.

Ms. Yee's assessment helps explain the reception of Powell's statement—there is fierce and determined allegiance to Daw Suu Kyi, not only because of her eloquence and bravery, but because she has transcended her religious identity to become a national hero of human rights. Colin Powell's rhetorical sensitivity to her identity as the defender for Burmese human rights does help the Bush administration build alliances with social movement leaders and members—a central feature of rhetorical diplomacy. While I stand by my earlier assessment that Powell's caustic rhetoric limited international alliance building, his statement is obviously compelling for an audience which is passionately devoted to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Indeed, in almost every tea shop and restaurant I visited, the owners proudly displayed posters of Aung San Suu Kyi.

The content of Secretary of State Colin Powell's published opinion and *Wall Street Journal* article is fairly extreme. While Powell's language here is course and undiplomatic, his straightforward defense of Aung San Suu Kyi is appealing to respondents. This result clearly shows that Powell's sensitivity for the rhetorical situation was in tune with Burmese democracy movement actors. While Clinton and Obama officials avoided such caustic language in their foreign policy statements, respondents responded more positively to Colin Powell's statement.

**Comparing Data: Assessing Political and Social Issues**

In this section, I explore key political and social issues and compare them to motivating factors which impacted respondents' answers. The goal of these questions was not only to assess respondents' level of agreement with the particular speech or

statement, but also to explore why respondents selected their answer. Rather than focusing on foreign-policy strategy, the emphasis of these questions is rooted in how the rhetorical diplomacy of administration officials' help align their audiences with U.S. democratic values. These survey questions focus on important U.S. policy issues such as constitutional reform, the rule of law, and economic development.

As in other sections, respondents are unaware of the identity of the administration official. In his speech, Obama positions the ideal future of Burmese democracy by locating U.S. democratic values, which extends freedom to all citizens. Table 10 and Figure 13 reveal that respondents are willing to definitively express their agreement. While Professor Myint and Dr. Oo may have been correct in their assertion that Burmese respondents may be reluctant to select "strongly agree" as an answer, Obama's construction of an ideal Burmese democracy broadly appealed to respondents. In this excerpt, Obama articulates the concerns that every Burmese citizen has today: a military regime which has been more predator than protector, the exploitation of the weak by the strong, and the prospect of a nationally-ratified Constitution. During many of my interviews, these three issues surfaced repeatedly— many of my interviewees were concerned about the constitutional reforms which could then impact the possibility of free and fair elections. In my 2014 interview, Dr. Hlaing explains why the issue of constitutional reform is important:

> And right now the amendment of the constitution should be supported by many so-called democratic parties and many democratic armed forces should support [it]. And some of the monks and even them. And the amendment of the constitution—it is for the reform. But actually the 2008 constitution should be totally abolished and redraw a new one. (Appendix B)

Table 10
*Areas of Concern: Barack Obama 2012 Yangon University Speech*

| You need to reach for a future where the law is stronger than any single leader, because it's accountable to the people. You need to reach for a future where no child is made to be a soldier and no woman is exploited, and where the laws protect them even if they're vulnerable, even if they're weak; a future where national security is strengthened by a military that serves under civilians and a Constitution that guarantees that only those who are elected by the people may govern. | | |
|---|---|---|
| Value | Percent | Count |
| Strongly disagree | 1.7 | 8 |
| Disagree | 3.6 | 17 |
| Undecided | 4.6 | 22 |
| Agree | 40.4 | 192 |
| Strongly agree | 49.7 | 236 |
| Total | | 475 |

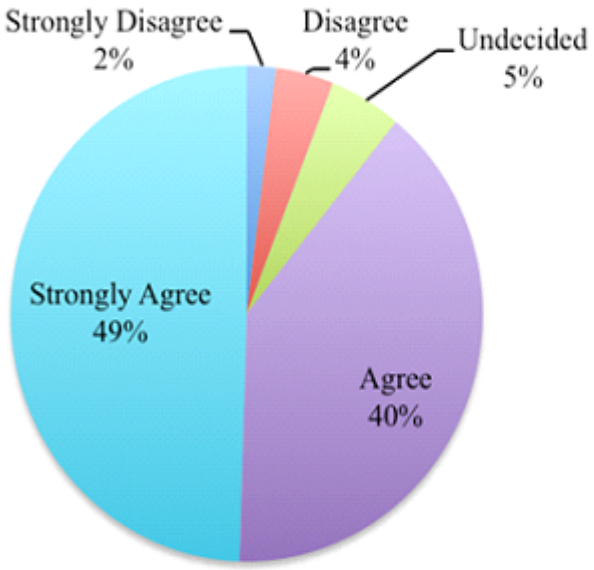



*Figure 13.* Areas of concern: Barack Obama 2012 Yangon University speech.

Constitutional reform is no small matter in Burma: it has been used as a tool by the military junta to control and oppress popular democracy. My interview with Dr. Hlaing explains why high numbers of respondents would agree and strongly agree with Obama's speech. In describing how ideal democracy works, Obama also uses language that does not demonize the regime as brutal thugs or criminals. While Secretary of State Colin Powell's rhetorical assassination of the military junta was popular among respondents, respondents overwhelmingly approved of Obama's rhetorical explication of democracy. Obama's rhetorical diplomacy reveals that it is possible to align a message with social movement actors without using a pathos of righteous indignation that reduces the ability to engage with other leaders within Burma, as well as allies of Burma who may disagree with extreme points of view. Obama reveals that it is more prudent to criticize the despotic and brutal regime without casting aspersions on their character. Focusing on what the people desire from their government instead of the character of the regime, Obama gains the popular support of his audience while preserving his capacity to negotiate with regime leaders. Achieving this balance is an essential feature of rhetorical diplomacy: forming and sustaining alliances with political partners while taking advantage of the opportune moment (*kairos*) when alliances are used to pressure a regime.

Comparing respondents' answers to motivating factors, Figure 14 reveals some reasons as to why respondents strongly agreed with Obama's speech. As in the previous comparison table, political views rank first among the reasons why respondents strongly agreed with Obama. The political nature of his speech logically

has an impact on this data; and while "my political views" is consistently a popular reason, it provides more of a benchmark than a result, which will bring fruitful discussion. This may be due to the fact that this survey is inherently political and was distributed to democracy movement members—people who are involved in politics.

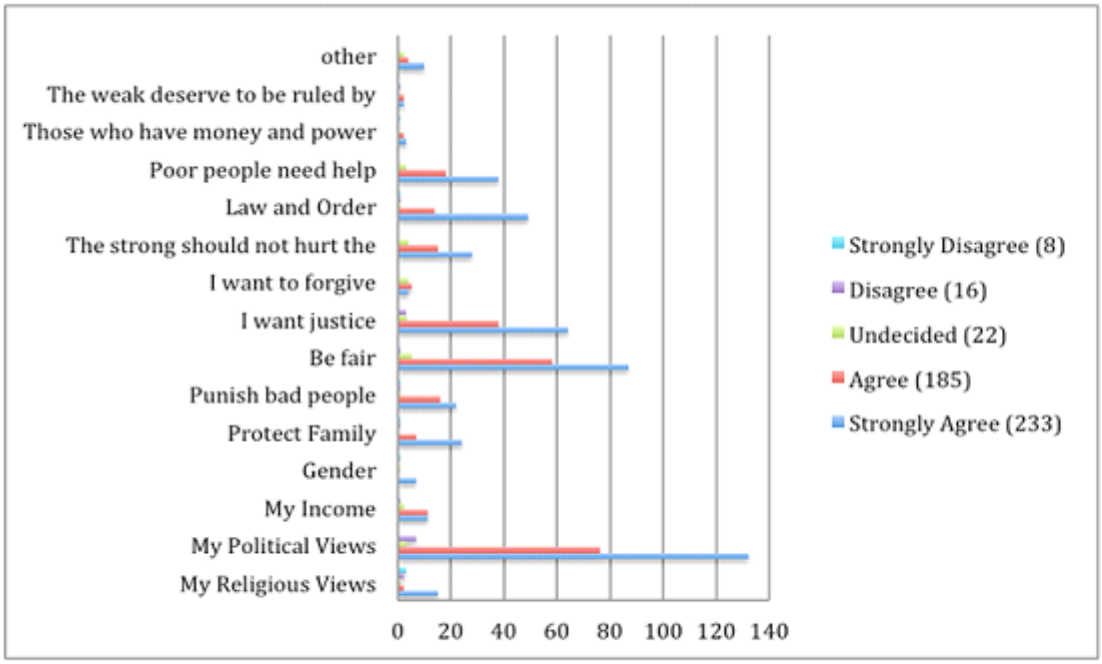



*Figure 14.* Numerical comparison chart of Obama's Yangon University Speech. Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following options?

More remarkable are the other data points: fairness and justice rank second and third among those who "strongly agree" and "agree" with Obama's speech. The correlation between those who strongly agreed with Obama's speech and fairness, as a motivating factor, is telling. Obama's speech discusses the behavior of a democratic society where members should not live in fear from their government but should be protected by their government. The prevalence of fairness as a motivating factor, rather

than law and order, is an interesting result, for much of Obama's speech discusses the rule of law. Perhaps respondents strongly agree with Obama from their sense of fairness and justice; perhaps because respondents' opinion of government crackdowns on "illegal protests" is more about fairness than it is about the rule of law. Thus, Obama's exhortation that leaders must abide by the rule of law connects with respondents' sense of fairness and is more closely connected to equality. In my 2014 interview, Kyaw Thu explains how fairness is connected to equality:

> The thing is that it needs to be fair and square. The Constitution needs to be strong. We need a Constitution that is standing on the side of the people. The law is strange, if you take 300K its corruption. The leaders—the government, they do whatever they want, so if America, England or who ever come in they will be discourage. They need to change themselves. There's no transparency. (Appendix C)

Kyaw Thu's idea of equal protection under the law offers an explanation why respondents would select fairness and justice and motivating reasons for agreeing and strongly agreeing with Obama's speech. Fairness is more attributive of equal treatment for a population who have never experienced what the "rule of law" is.

I was surprised by these results. Perhaps mistakenly, in the preliminary planning phases of this survey, I hypothesized that religious views would rank among the highest motivating factors. However, Figure 14 reveals that religious views received fewer than 20 responses and consistently ranked among the lowest of the 15 categories throughout the survey (Appendix M). Planning the survey in my office in Minnesota, I predicted that the religious values, rooted in the popularity of Buddhism in Burma, would be primary factors for agreement/disagreement. Although Kyaw Thu and many

other interviews referenced their religious beliefs, they did so in order to substantiate their claim that the regime has violated the values of the Burmese people.

Jimmy Ko (2014 Interview), an important leader in the 1988 protests, explains how his Buddhist beliefs help inform his political life:

> I asked a lot of questions about myself: 'who am I?" 'Why are there humans in world?" These are very important questions. So I studying teachings of Buddha again and again and I began to really understand what is a human being. We have to do three things as a human being, three processes. Three categories of a human being: first, do good for yourself. Second category is higher than first category: do good for your society. Third category is highest, do good for your universe. Loca—it's the highest space. So, its for human beings to live and do good in the world. Without these categories, we're not human beings. In order to do good for yourself, you must do good back. (Appendix D)

Jimmy explains that his religious studies helped him better understand how representatives in a democracy work to serve the people. Asking respondents to indicate whether their religious viewpoints were motivating factors for their answer is too global, too abstract, and perhaps not particularly connected to their political life in the way I thought it was. Jimmy's explanation helps clarify why fairness and justice are better descriptive terms which may be more appealing to respondents.

Table 11 and Figure 15 reveal that, while respondents had a lower rate of agreement, they still largely agreed with the statement by Condoleezza Rice. The survey results reveal some differences between administration officials, but for the most part Burmese respondents largely agreed with positions taken by the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations. The results in Table 11 show a much lower rate of "strongly agree." The larger rate of "agree" is likely due to the fact that this particular

Table 11
*Opinion of Condoleezza Rice's 2006 Remarks in Jakarta, Indonesia*

Every young democracy in Southeast Asia now faces a similar challenge: building democratic institutions that function transparently and accountably. Institutions like the rule of law, an independent judiciary, and a free media help to ensure that leaders remain responsible to their people. In other places, however, democracy still faces determined opponents, and where freedom is under attack, it must be defended.

| Value | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly disagree | 1.5 | 7 |
| Disagree | 3.8 | 18 |
| Undecided | 7.0 | 33 |
| Agree | 54.7 | 258 |
| Strongly agree | 33.1 | 156 |
| Total | | 472 |

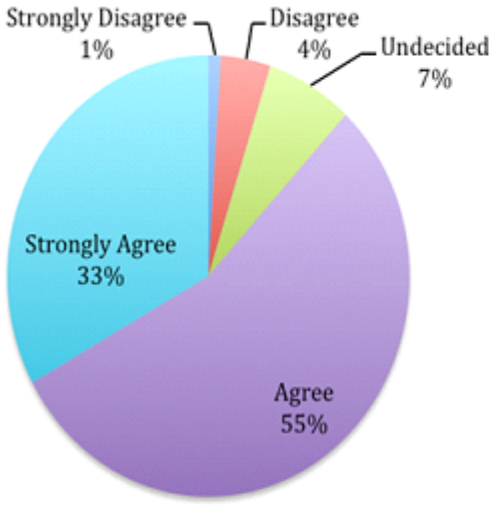



*Figure 15.* Opinion of Condoleezza Rice's 2006 Remarks in Jakarta, Indonesia.

quote did not strongly resonate with respondents as Obama's speech (Table 10). However, there were not greater numbers of "strongly disagree" and "disagree." Rice argues that salient features of a healthy democracy (rule of law, independent judiciary, free media) are under attack in Burma. Respondents are asked to assess their agreement with Secretary of State Rice's underpinning argument that they face a challenge in building democratic institutions.

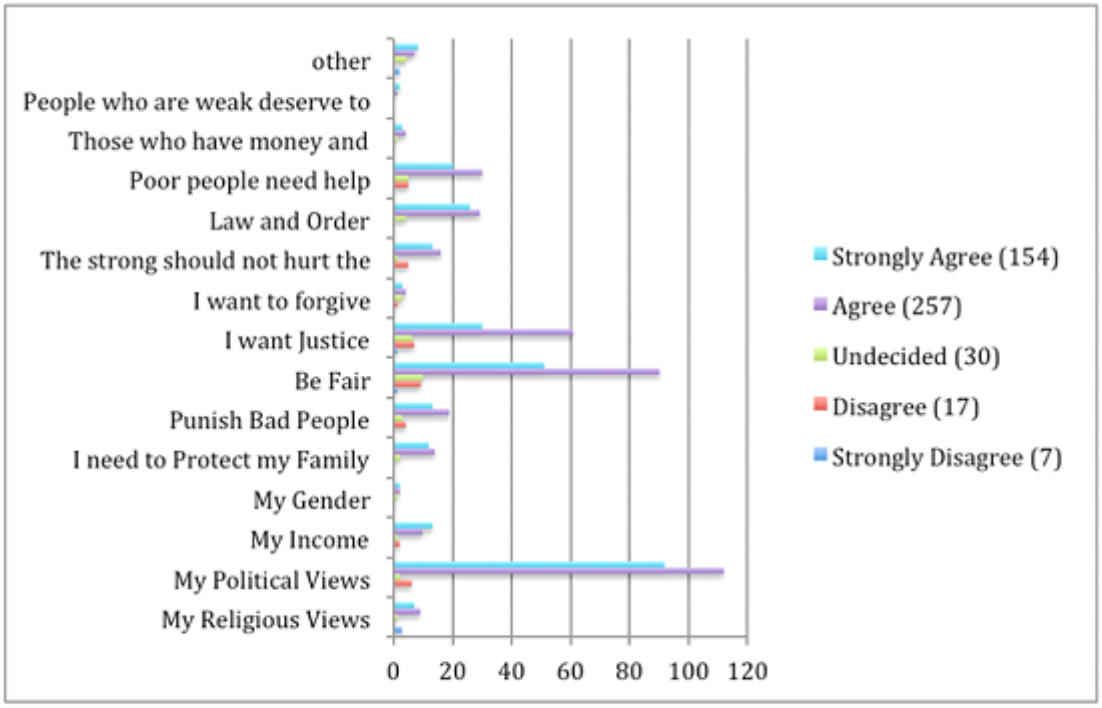
What is most important about Rice's speech is the explanation of what freedom and democracy entail: the rule of law, an independent judiciary, and a free media. These U.S. democratic values are consistently articulated in three administrations. Burmese respondents may broadly agree with this argument, yet perhaps the difference with "strongly agree" is rooted in a lack of rhetorical sensitivity for income inequality. Shin Win Yee (2014 interview) explains how Burmese connect democracy:

> The law are not for the people; the law are for the gun. If you got money, then whatever you do, you will win. You will win at the high court, you know. Even if you make mistake, yeah you will win. They will cover [up]. But if you are poor, you go to prison. (Appendix F)

Many of my interviewees listed economic equality and the growing disparity between the rich and poor as the primary focus of their democratic struggles. Rice's assessment of democracy may reveal that she is unaware of how poverty creates a real burden on the capacity for freedom to exist. While Rice does describe the central features of a modern Western democracy, the Burmese people may consider equality in ways that may be well outside of Rice's oriented values. Let us look at why respondents answered this way (see Figure 16). As with the motivating factors of respondents with

Obama's speech, respondents gave similar reasons. While respondents who strongly agreed with Obama's speech, here the emphasis is on "agree," but the motivating factors are largely the same. Unsurprisingly "my political views" ranks the highest with "be fair" and "I want justice," ranked second and third, respectively, as the primary motivating factors for giving their agreement. Respondents are fairly consistent in their selection of these three primary features—there are not considerable differences between their selection of motivating factors from one question to the next. This may further point to reflexive consistency in respondent viewpoints as they evaluate speeches and statements. Respondents may not view the speeches and statements offered in the survey as remarkably different from each other.

Madeleine Albright's statement on the situation in Burma in late 2000 was the Clinton administration's closing assessment of the oppression suffered by pro-democracy members and leaders. Table 12 and Figure 17 show that 43% of respondents strongly agreed with Albright's assessment of the situation in Burma. While it was rare for President Bill Clinton to speak about the Burmese pro-democracy movement, Albright was among the more vocal supporters for democratic reform in Burma. Albright's statement received a 43% majority of "strongly agree" that was closer to Obama's 49% of "strongly agree." While Albright had more numbers of "undecided" and "disagree," and "strongly disagree," more respondents strongly




How was your answer impacted by the following reasons?

agreed with her statement than with Rice's. Albright discussion of ethnic minorities in the year 2000 continues to be a significant factor in Burmese politics. The underlying tensions of ethnic conflict and war in the border regions have continued to make this particular issue at the forefront of discussions of the political future in Burma. Table 12 reveals that many Burmese strongly agree with Albright's assessment that the regime harms ethnic minorities.

In comparison to the other correlation tables, the data in Figure 18 are not particularly striking. Although more respondents strongly agreed with Albright's statement, the motivating factors for that agreement seem to follow a similar pattern with the other speeches and statements. There certainly seems to be a pattern emerging

Table 12
*Secretary of State Madeleine Albright 2000 Speech: Remarks At Opening Session Introducing Videotape Message from Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi*

We have pointed out that Burma's prosperity and stability depend on having a political system that reflects the wishes of the Burmese people. And we have stressed the importance of initiating a dialogue with the democratic opposition and representatives of ethnic minority groups. Sadly, the authorities have responded by making a terrible situation even worse. They have stepped up their intimidation of the democratic opposition and arrested more elected members of Parliament. And they continue to increase military expenditures, while urgent social needs go unmet.

| Value | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly disagree | 3.4 | 16 |
| Disagree | 6.9 | 32 |
| Undecided | 9.9 | 46 |
| Agree | 36.7 | 171 |
| Strongly agree | 43.1 | 201 |
| Total | | 466 |

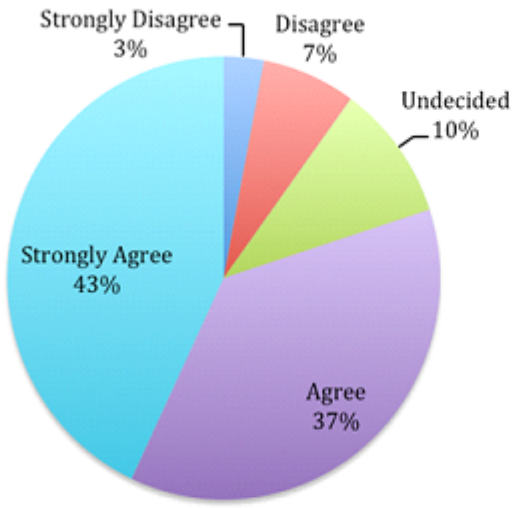



*Figure 17.* Secretary of State Madeleine Albright 2000 speech.

here with respondent motivating factors. However, subsequent sections of this survey will reveal that this pattern is not reflexive. The changes in corollary data do reveal that respondents may be carefully considering their answers and are not choosing the same motivating factor in every corollary multiple-choice question.

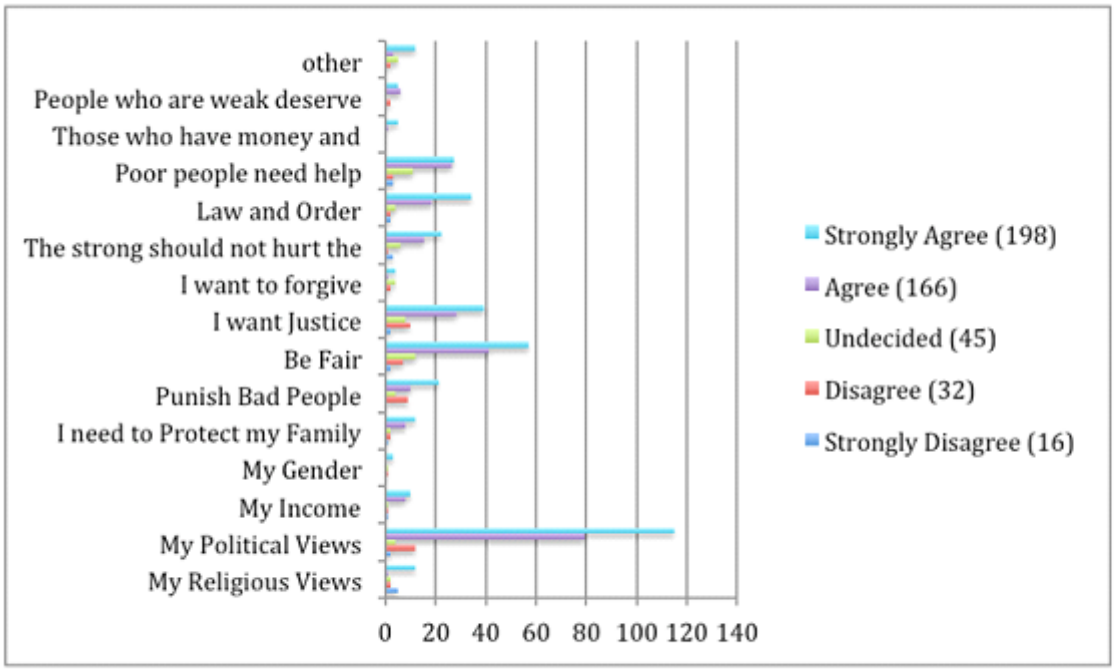



*Figure 18.* Numerical comparison chart to Table 11 results. Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following options?

**Assessment of Presidential Performance, Engagement, and Affiliation**

This section asks respondents their opinions of the strategy of presidents in helping to create reform in Burma. While the first question of the survey had asked respondents to choose the president that best represents their political views, this section asks respondents to rate their satisfaction with presidential foreign-policy strategy. In the planning phases of this survey, I felt it was important for respondents

to have a chance to articulate their satisfaction of foreign policies which had a direct impact on their lives.

While Clinton was more willing to use international organizations, he did little to directly engage with Burmese leaders and dissidents. Bush, on the other hand, used engagement as a *condition* of reform—he viewed engagement as a reward and not as a method to facilitate reform. Obama instituted a policy of principled engagement, whereby he vocalized his willingness to speak to any leader—regardless of their relationship with the United States. In this section, I ask respondents to assess the performance of presidents and to give their opinion about presidential engagement.

I tried position questions in this section in a way that did not force respondents to make a choice between their satisfaction of Clinton, Bush, and Obama. As the results will show, respondent satisfaction follows a trend, where satisfaction seems to be more closely related to changes on the ground in Burma.

In Table 13 and Figure 19, respondents are largely split on their assessment of Bill Clinton's Burma foreign policy strategy. A significant number of respondents chose to remain neutral on this question; perhaps respondents were unwilling to reveal a particularly negative view of Clinton. As Dr. Mimi Oo and Professor Tun Myint argued, Burmese people will have a hard time being overtly critical of someone who holds an elite status as Clinton does—they may thus feel that a negative assessment would be course and hostile to someone who deserves respect. While Clinton administration officials' speeches and statements broadly received agreement, it is

Table 13
*What Is Your Opinion of How U.S. President Bill Clinton's Strategy Was Effective in Helping Create Reform in Myanmar?*

| Value | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Very dissatisfied | 4.5 | 21 |
| Dissatisfied | 20.3 | 94 |
| Neutral | 31.8 | 147 |
| Satisfied | 36.5 | 169 |
| Very satisfied | 6.9 | 32 |
| Total | | 463 |

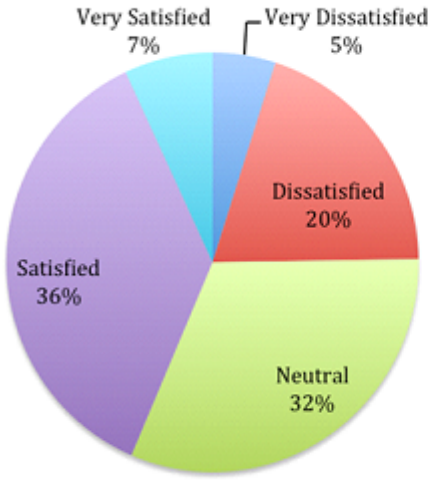



*Figure 19.* What is your opinion of how U.S. President Bill Clinton's strategy was effective in helping create reform in Myanmar?

likely that respondents were not overwhelmingly satisfied with Clinton's strategy simply because they did not notice significant changes in their political and economic situation during his tenure in office.

The overwhelming lack of positive assessment speaks volumes about how effective respondents feel President Clinton's strategy was: only about 36% of respondents were satisfied with Clinton's strategy in Burma. More importantly, over 25% (dissatisfied *and* very dissatisfied) of respondents expressed a negative viewpoint. Table 13 and Figure 19 reveal that, although respondents previously agreed with Clinton's speeches and statements, their approval may be heavily influenced by how little change occurred in Burma during his administration. In his defense, Clinton's lack of rhetorical diplomacy in Burma was likely due to his focus on many exigencies he encountered in Europe following the dissolution of the USSR. In my 2014 interview with U Htut Oo, Chairman of the Mandalay NLD, I asked why he thought changes were occurring in Burma. His response helps explain in part why people are not overwhelmingly satisfied with the Clinton administration's Burma policy strategy:

> In 1990 a lot of NLD was also famous in this situation in the past, but 1) is after 1990, because of the pressure from the government, the pressure didn't change the people who support the NLD, but they didn't get into participation only. Now people get in front of the situation, and the second reason is that this is the time because the government they could not make the country progress. Everything in our country become worse. The third one is—because of the sanction and pressure from around the world, from other countries. (Appendix H)

Chairman Oo reveals that little changed in Burma prior to the Obama administration. Although he explains that there were several factors that limited that change, Oo implies that the United States could have done more previously to compel the regime to reform.

Measuring the satisfaction with the Bush administration's reform strategy, the results in Table 14 and Figure 20 closely resemble those of Clinton's. With only a few

percentage points differing on each of the five levels of satisfaction, respondents feel similarly as they did toward Clinton. This is remarkable because of differences in the

Table 14
*What Is Your Opinion of How U.S. President George W. Bush's Strategy Was Effective in Helping Create Reform in Myanmar?*

| Value | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Very dissatisfied | 3.5 | 16 |
| Dissatisfied | 20.2 | 93 |
| Neutral | 33.2 | 153 |
| Satisfied | 35.8 | 165 |
| Very satisfied | 7.4 | 34 |
| Total | | 461 |

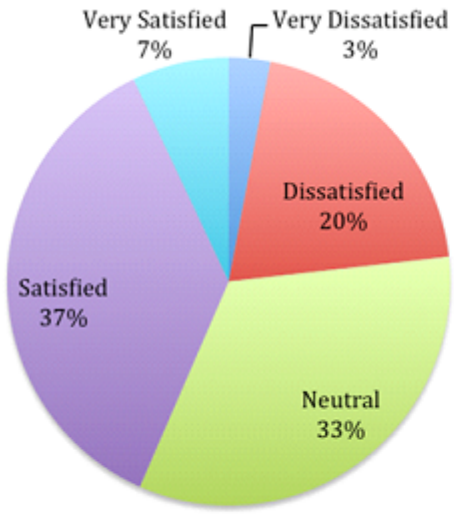



*Figure 20.* What is your opinion of how U.S. President George W. Bush's strategy was effective in helping create reform in Myanmar?

respondents similarly felt that these two presidents were largely ineffectual in their ability to press the regime to reform.

This dissertation works to give indigenous peoples a space to express their opinion of the policies which influence their country. The results could not be clearer: the Burmese people were not satisfied with the reform strategy of the Clinton and Bush administrations. While a president's rhetorical diplomacy works to form alliances with audiences through speeches and statements, satisfaction with presidential leadership limits the extent to which rhetorical diplomacy may forge those alliances necessary to pressure a regime to reform. Even with his caustic bravado, the George W. Bush administration was unable to threaten the regime into embracing substantive reform.

With only 37% indicating that they were "satisfied" and 7% indicating that they were "very satisfied," a significant number of respondents were not satisfied with the results. The lesson here becomes clear: a president's rhetorical style may be immediately appealing to audiences, yet the perception of Bush's rhetorical diplomacy is undermined as he failed to create changes for the Burmese people.

Moving to the assessment of Obama's reform strategy, Table 15 and Figure 21 reveal that respondents were 53% satisfied with his strategy in Burma. More remarkable is that 30% of respondents indicated that they were "very satisfied" with the Obama administration's strategy. Less than 25% of respondents indicated that they were anything but satisfied with Obama's strategy. Indeed, only 6% of respondents indicated that they were "dissatisfied," and less than 2% of respondents indicated that they were "very dissatisfied" with Obama's strategy.

Table 15
*What Is Your Opinion of How U.S. President Barack Obama's Strategy Was Effective in Helping Create Reform in Myanmar?*

| Value | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Very dissatisfied | 1.7 | 8 |
| Dissatisfied | 6.1 | 29 |
| Neutral | 8.3 | 39 |
| Satisfied | 53.2 | 251 |
| Very satisfied | 30.7 | 145 |
| Total | | 472 |

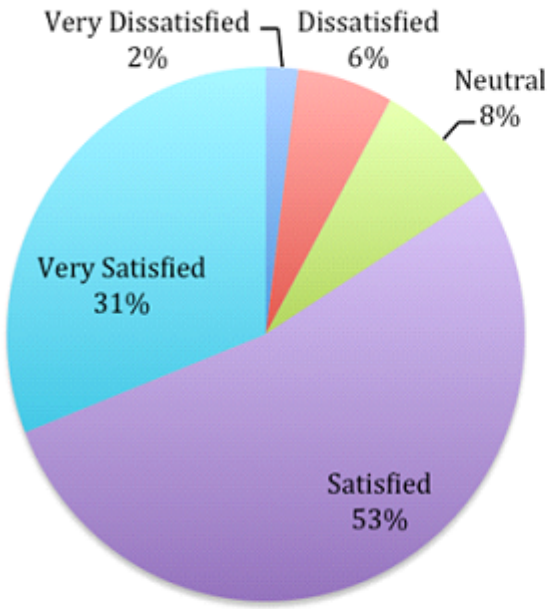



*Figure 21.* What is your opinion of how U.S. President Barack Obama's strategy was effective in helping create reform in Myanmar?

Table 15 presents results that would be unthinkable for a sitting president in the United States: there are been few instances when U.S. presidents achieved over 75% satisfaction ratings (satisfied *and* very satisfied). Here, respondents seem to overwhelmingly approve Obama's strategy. This both speaks volumes about their assessment of the present conditions in Burma, as well as the prospect for continued reform. Satisfaction with Obama's rhetorical diplomacy might not stem from respondent perception that he has been successful in forming alliances with social movement actors. Simply, respondents have seen changes occur in their country during Obama's tenure in office and have attributed those changes to Obama's leadership.

The overwhelming approval of Obama's foreign-policy strategy in Burma is not an indictment of the previous two administrations. Through the efforts and leadership of previous administrations, Obama was able to rhetorically form alliances with social movement actors and regime allies and successfully pressure the regime to reform. Survey results seem to indicate that Obama simply had a more effective strategy, but it is also likely that respondent satisfaction with Obama will decrease if political reforms are reversed or if Obama's leadership fails to bring about free and fair elections in 2015. Thus, the results of this survey conclude that while respondents broadly agree with U.S. administration speeches and statements, their satisfaction with a president hinges on their perception of changes in their country.

**Human Rights, Engagement, and the Future of Burma**

This section explores the prospect of peace and reconciliation when or if free and fair elections are held, and Burma democratic movement actors finally realize their

dream of a representative democracy. In many ways, Burma's experience with oppression at the hands of a minority, the military, is similar to apartheid South Africa. While ethnicity and race were not factors in whether one retained status and wealth in Burma, membership in the military privileged the few military families who have tenaciously clung to power in ways similar to the white apartheid government in South Africa. Other similarities surface, as well, with Aung San Suu Kyi, who endured house arrest for decades as her fellow democratic movement leaders and members were imprisoned under terrible conditions for as much as 16 years—their only crime, like Mandela, was the desire to free themselves from oppression. Archbishop Desmond Tutu (2010) writes of Aung San Suu Kyi's release from house arrest:

> Freedom, justice and goodness have yet again been vindicated as they were vindicated on the release of Nelson Mandela, whose example of compromise and reconciliation declared had inspired her: This remarkable woman said that she bore no one malice; she nursed no grudges against those who had treated her so unjustly; she had no bitterness; and she was ready to work for the healing of her motherland, which had suffered so grievously. (p. xv)

Like Mandela and Gandhi, Aung San Suu Kyi and fellow democratic movement leaders have followed a political path of nonviolence—even when the military brutality crushed their movement time and time again. I recognized, however, when working with my Burmese translator team, that there was a strong sense of hurt and a desire to seek redress of the human rights abuses committed against them. With so much hurt and anger toward the government, I then wondered, what is the prospect of peace when the people are empowered? With so many decades of abuse at the hands of the military, much like what happened in South Africa, how can Burma follow a similar

path of reconciliation and not break apart into civil war, as Nelson Mandela's foreword thinking leadership prevented? Are Burmese democracy movement members predisposed to reconcile in ways similar to post-apartheid South Africa?

I begin answering these questions by turning to the question of engagement with human rights abusers, as a rhetorical diplomacy strategy: While Obama's willingness to sit at the bargaining table with any foreign leader is controversial domestically, that willingness in part helped bring about a political solution to oppression and continued imprisonment of Burmese pro-democracy leaders and members. Rhetorical diplomacy demands: that leaders form alliances to pressure a resistant regime, take advantage of the opportune moment (*kairos*) to pressure that regime, and then engage the regime in order to fully press reform. I asked respondents whether they approved of engaging with regime leaders who violated human rights. The results in Table 16 and Figure 22

Table 16
*Should U.S. Leaders Directly Engage With World Leaders Accused of Human Rights Abuses*

| Your country recently came out of a long period of isolation from much of the world due to what U.S. presidents called human rights abuses. Do you agree that the U.S. should directly engage with world leaders who are accused of human rights abuses? | | |
|---|---|---|
| Value | Percent | Count |
| Strongly disagree | 17.0 | 80 |
| Disagree | 18.3 | 86 |
| Undecided | 13.6 | 64 |
| Agree | 38.1 | 179 |
| Strongly agree | 13.0 | 61 |
| Total | | 470 |

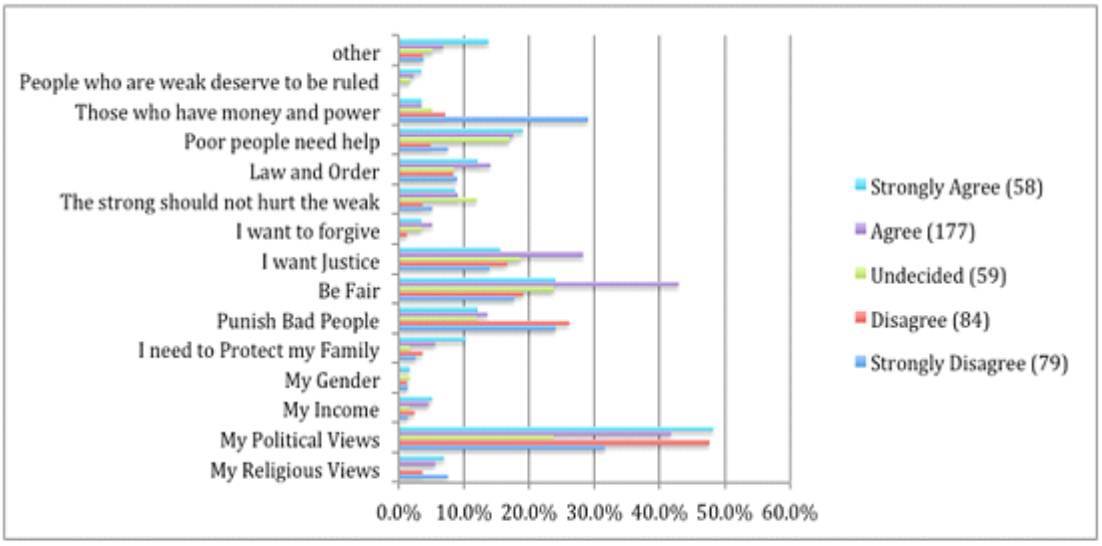

*Figure 22.* Should U.S. leaders directly engage with world leaders accused of human rights abuses.

are somewhat surprising. While the Obama administration has placed principled engagement as the hallmark of its diplomatic efforts, this seems to be a divisive issue among Burmese respondents. While "agree" had a greater selection rate than the other choices, it only received 38%. "Strongly agree" only received 13%. These results are important because they conflict in some ways with respondent satisfaction with Obama's foreign-policy strategy. While respondents overwhelmingly were satisfied with Obama, they do not overwhelmingly approve of engagement with those who have committed human rights abuses.

More interesting are the levels of "strongly disagree" and "disagree." The rates of disagreement with the prospect of engagement with those accused of human rights

abuses really asks respondents whether they feel it is prudent to negotiate with human rights abusers in their own country. While the prospect of negotiating with human rights abusers or even rewarding those abusers for reform is controversial in the United States—it seems even less popular in Burma.

In order to unpack why respondents agree with Obama's overall strategy may be conflicted about a strategy of engagement, I asked a follow-up question. As with previous motivating factors, Figure 23 reveals "my political views" as a factor for "strongly agree" with engaging leaders who are accused of human rights abuses. I constructed this figure using percentages rather than real numbers because of the more even rate of agreement in Figure 22. The comparison data in Figure 23 reveals that fairness is a significant factor for respondents who agree that the United States should directly engage with world leaders who were accused of human rights abuses. Likewise,




answer? How was your answer impacted by the following options?

over 25% of those who "agree" with this position also chose "I want justice." However, less than 20% of those who "agree" with engagement selected "poor people need help" as their motivating factor.

In the second highest category of agreement, "disagree," political views were the primary motivating factor: 50% of respondents selected this answer as their reason for disagreement. However, over 25% of respondents selected "punish bad people" as their motivating factor. Fairness and justice followed close behind with almost 20% of those who disagreed that the United States should engage with world leaders accused of human rights abuses. The correlation between disagreement and motivating factors makes sense here: punishing bad people, fairness, and injustice seem to be likely factors that would motivate their disagreement with engagement with human rights abusers.

As with the other categories, political views constituted the primary motivating factor for "strongly disagree." However, those who strongly disagreed selected multiple motivating factors: Almost 30% of those who strongly disagreed with engagement in Figure 19 selected "those who have money and power deserve it." At first glance, this correlation does not make any sense—why would those who strongly disagree with engaging human rights abusers select this motivating factor? It is likely that respondents felt that "those who have money and power deserve it" meant that those who have money and power should be deserving of it—that their wealth should stem from their integrity. In the planning phases of the survey, I wanted to offer this reason as a way to reveal the motivating factors of those who were in favor of the regime, for those who retain power and money in Burma likely feel they deserve their privileged

position. The results here conflict with that sense—perhaps respondents here are articulating the ethical means by which people retain money and power.

The results in Figure 23 reveal multiple reasons why respondents disagreed or agreed with the prospect of engaging those who were accused of human rights. In a country defined by brutal oppression by the regime, it is no surprise that this particular question would be controversial among respondents. In many of my interviews, there was a sense that Burma needs to be able to move on from its past. During my 2014 interview, Jimmy explained his support for dialogue with regime leaders:

> Our colleagues Min Ko Naing and Min Ko Gyi met with Barack Obama at Yangon University. We are the main players in this, so Americans and other countries support us. Americans and other countries should support to have the concrete national dialogue in our country. Now we are trying to have a national dialogue. We need concrete action. Every government can accept a concrete national dialogue. I know we can solve everything by dialogue. (Appendix D)

During my interview with Jimmy, I was struck by his amazing lack of bitterness—even when he described in detail how he was tortured by prison guards for reading books in Insein Prison. Because of his love of reading books, which were illegal in prison, he was held in solitary confinement "for months and beaten many times" (Appendix D). Even with these abuses, Jimmy still favors dialogue and nonviolence as a way to reform his government—even if that means engaging with those who were responsible for his ill-treatment.

Democratic movement leaders may have more foresight and political sensitivity in constructing lasting peace than the broader movement membership, who wish some sort of justice for those who tortured, raped, and imprisoned them. Figure 23 reveals

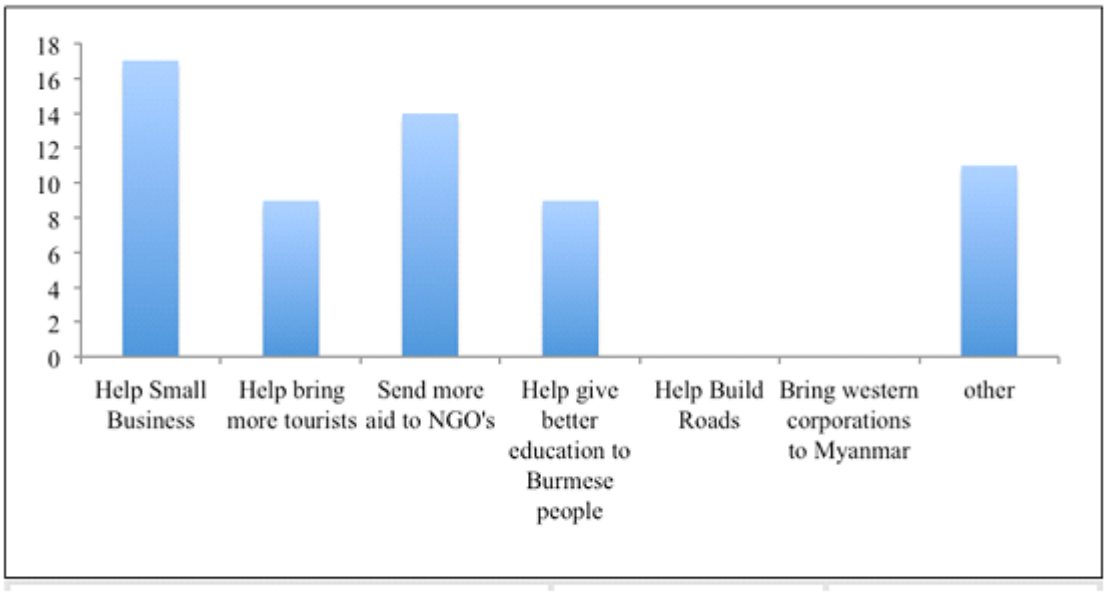
that Burmese democracy members are not unified behind Jimmy's insistence that dialogue with a regime who are guilty of human rights abuses government. These results may foretell the likelihood of peace and reconciliation in a post-regime Burma. While Nelson Mandela was a charismatic leader who pressed his people for reconciliation, Aung San Suu Kyi will have to similarly find ways to build the same sort of desire for reconciliation among her fellow NLD members.

While Burmese respondents are overwhelmingly satisfied with Barack Obama's ability to create reform in Burma, they are conflicted about a political strategy which engages with those who were accused of human rights abuses. Barack Obama explicitly maintains the efficacy of principled engagement, yet those who suffered the brutality of a military regime are conflicted about the prospect of a U.S. president negotiating with them.

Because economic equality facilitates the prospect of peace, I turn to Table 17 and Figure 24, which reveal respondent opinion of how the United States may best assist Burma's economic recovery. Table 17 and Figure 24 begin the work of this section by asking respondents to choose how a U.S. president may help Burma. Helping small business received the most emphasis, while bringing Western corporations to Myanmar received the very least. This result was particularly surprising, for while corporations could broadly improve the economy of Burma, small business was a focus for most respondents. In many of my interviews, cronyism was a common complaint—there was a sense that Western corporations would only help enrich those who abused the Burmese people in the past. This result shows that the focus of economic development

Table 17
*What Should the President of the United States Do to Help Myanmar?*

| Value | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Help small business | 17.4 | 81 |
| Help bring more tourists | 8.8 | 41 |
| Send more aid to NGOs | 13.6 | 63 |
| Help give better education to Burmese people | 9.3 | 43 |
| Help build roads | 0.4 | 2 |
| Bring Western corporations to Myanmar | 0.4 | 2 |
| Other | 11.2 | 52 |
| Total | | 465 |




should be in small business and should not bring large corporations who may only empower and further enrich those who were already wealthy. In this case, enriching

small business seems to also follow the pro-democracy ethos of respondents, for while large corporate interests may limit democratic reform, enlarging a healthy middle-class may more broadly empower the people.

Table 17 and Figure 24 reveal that 13% of all respondents wish to "send more aid to NGOs." Kyaw Thu's Free Funeral Service and Clinic, Dr. Tun Hlaing Hospital and Orphanage, and numerous organizations throughout Burma impact the daily lives of those who are less fortunate and struggle to survive. I was, therefore, surprised how few respondents selected this method of assistance. In my interview with Dr. Tun Hlaing (2014), he describes the complications in how Nyo assistance both serves the people and funds the military regime:

> Most of the NGOs go through the proper channel so that the government takes a cut; they take away and put it in their pocket. Not only that, you can pay some person, for using the money at the time and place, and the implementing company should be somehow related to the democratic institutions. Otherwise it goes to the military regime, as if you are supporting the military regime. And some small community work, and implementing the Marshall global community. They build schools and small houses and hospital. They give drugs, napkins, directly to the public schools here. (Appendix B)

In Burma, nongovernmental organizations often mean the difference between life and death for many Burmese people. Because the majority of the population are mired in poverty, these organizations may deserve further assistance from the United States. Dr. Hlaing's shocking revelation of how NYO funding flows into the pockets of the regime should cause the United States to reform how funding reaches the people who need it most. It is, perhaps, for this reason that only 13% of respondents indicated that NYO funding was the best way the United States could help Burma.

"Help give better education to Burmese people" ranked third. During the planning phases of this survey, I learned that the military regime had systematically undermined the educational system in Burma. My team of translators told me that the government felt that the existential threat to their power emanated from the University system because teachers collaborated with students in the 1988 revolution. Today, universities have only recently opened and have received the least attention in Burma in the process of reform. There is strong resistance throughout the regime for giving more independence to teachers and universities. Following this line of thinking, Kyaw Thu (2014 interview) explains how the U.S. should assist Burma:

> We have many organizations here in Burma—for example, there are organizations in Shan. We need training in the country. For example, health—even first aid training. Money is not the most important factor—we collect money from the people but we are still lacking expertise. If you could send experts to teach and provide training and technology. (Appendix C)

Kyaw complains throughout his interview that the money pouring into Burma flows into the pockets of those who are already wealthy. He revealed that this new wealth, which has caused the price inflation of basic foodstuffs, has actually made life more difficult for the poor (Appendix C). His solution, which finds agreement in the survey, is to increase the training and education of Burmese in order to create a functioning civil society and economy. However, regime leaders continue to feel that the universities constitute an existential threat to their power, and perhaps this is a well-founded position. After all, the 1962 and 1988 revolutions against the government both came out of universities. Indeed, the pro-democracy movement was a student-led movement. All of the leaders whom I interviewed in Burma were students at the time in 1988 and were

instrumental in fomenting rebellion against the government. It is for this reason that respondents are likely to see education as a way to reassert freedom of expression and economic equality.

## Rhetorical Reconciliation: The Prospect of Peace in a Post-Regime Burma

Reconciliation with those who have committed brutal acts against a people is a rhetorical process where language is used to facilitate a new beginning of peaceful coexistence. Erik Doxtader (2008), South African rhetorical reconciliation scholar, explains the critical nature of speech:

> Put differently, reconciliation struggles to fashion the potential for that speaking which holds the potential to [re]make the grounds for speech. Between 1985 and 1995 in South Africa this [meta]concern appears within many different calls for reconciliation and widespread discussions about its capacity to figure the time and support the collective work of transition viewed alone in over time. These exchanges show that oppose communities and sworn enemies were mutually interested in the idea of reconciliation, able to define, debate, and revise its meaning, and willing to defend the proposition [within limits] that its pursuit could play a substantive role in the design and enactment of political-constitutional reform. (p. 14)

Doxtader reveals that reconciliation is rooted in the sense that, through language, communities who have been at war with each other may negotiate, define, and pursue substantive ways to move forward from the rhetorical dichotomy of abuser versus victim. More than just forgiving those who have committed human rights abuses in the past, reconciliation allows two parties to play a role in the design of a sustainable post-regime government. Doxstader's treatment of South African thus offers some insight into the prospect of how the Burmese abusers and victims may possibly rhetorically negotiate their futures together.

I end my survey research here with an effort to understand how post-regime Burma could function as a democracy—especially given the fact that so many Burmese suffered at the hands of the regime for decades. While this dissertation seeks to explain the relevance of a president's words and how those words work within the design of rhetorical diplomacy, the lasting impact of U.S. leadership in Burma is predicated on the prospect of reconciliation. While post-apartheid South Africa struggled to make sense of the racial tensions which were at the heart of human rights abuses suffered by the African majority, Burma similarly faces a prospect of reconciling with a minority of privileged military families who brutalized a majority of poor and powerless Burmese.

Even beyond the tensions rooted in the military regimes' oppression of the Burmese in general, long-standing ethnic tensions in Burma may limit the capacity for Aung San Suu Kyi to sustain peace throughout Burma. Indeed, the transition to democracy is an opportunity to finally empower the people, yet political transitions often present new dangers of instability. The questions in the final section thus seek to determine whether respondents are receptive to the idea of reconciliation. I position reconciliation in two different ways: I first ask respondents whether they agree with the prospect of trying in court those who committed human rights abuses in the past. The second question does more than rephrase the first: I ask respondents whether the Burmese people should forgive those who committed human rights abuses in the past. The interplay between justice and forgiveness should reveal how reconciliation could be negotiated rhetorically. Turning to Table 18 and Figure 25, the results show a high degree of agreement for trying those who committed human rights abuses in the past.

Table 18 and Figure 25 reveal broad-based support for trying in court those who committed human rights abuses. With "strongly agree" and "agree" both receiving almost 38% of all responses, respondents broadly approve of seeking justice for those who committed human rights abuses. Although the willingness to use the legal system to seek justice points to a greater cultural value for peacefully resolving their differences with those who abused them in the past, it points to a larger cultural concern of deep-seated resentment in Burma. Govier (2002) explains the connection between justice and resentment:

> When bad things happen, our anger and resentment lead us to a sense of injustice and the desire to act to make things right, to get a kind of balance by bringing harm to the one who harmed us. So defined, justice requires retribution. (pp. 4-5)

Govier's explanation of how resentment and justice are rhetorically connected makes sense of the results in Table 18 and Figure 25, given that those whom I surveyed were members and leaders of democratic movements. They, more than many people in

Table 18
*As Your Country Reforms, Should the Government Try in Court Those Who Committed Human Rights Abuses in the Past?*

| Value | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly disagree | 3.9 | 18 |
| Disagree | 5.3 | 25 |
| Undecided | 15.8 | 74 |
| Agree | 37.8 | 177 |
| Strongly agree | 37.2 | 174 |
| Total | | 468 |

Burma, suffered brutal acts of torture, rape, and years of prolonged imprisonment because of their political beliefs. Although many of the leaders I spoke to did not seem resentful, the results from this question reveal an overwhelming desire to seek justice for those who abused them in the past.

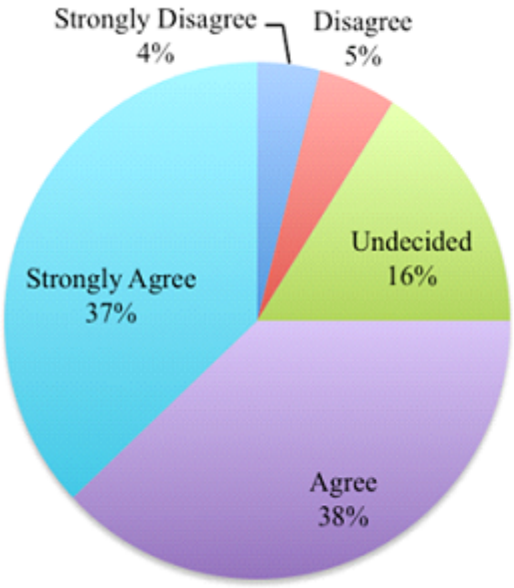



*Figure 25.* As your country reforms, should the government try to court those who committed human rights abuses in the past?

Even though the prospect of reform offers respondents the opportunity to redefine Burma's government, Table 18 and Figure 25 show continuing antipathy to letting go of past abuses. Although Nelson Mandela's truth and reconciliation panels rhetorically resolved the history of violence perpetrated by regime leaders, it remains to be seen whether the Burmese people themselves are open to a similar process. Table 18

and Figure 25 show that respondents plan to punish those who committed human rights abuses in the past.

In Figure 26, the numerical majority, "strongly agree," indicated that their political views were the primary motivating factor for their selection. However, there was a close split between "be fair" and "I want justice." This points to a strong correlation between desire for fairness and a desire for justice. Respondents here seem to be linking justice and fairness together as a reason for trying those who committed human rights abuses in court. This is not particularly surprising in the sense that fairness and justice are sometimes inextricably linked, as those who suffered abuse view justice as an extension of the cultural value of fairness.

Those who selected "strongly agree" also seemed split over "poor people need help" and "those who have money and power deserve it." This is a particularly surprising result because, on the surface, these motivating factors are almost diametrically opposed to each other. However, as I discussed earlier, respondents may view "those who have money and power deserve it" as "those who have money and power should be deserving of it." Although I am reluctant to pose an inferred reading of the results, the cultural differences of my respondents may be merely beyond my ability to explain the rate of response between these two factors. Khun Than Lwin (2014 interview), Chairman of the Shan State NLD explains how corruption is a common feature in Burma: "There are too many thieves, if you want to be a good businessman you have to bribe everybody," and "even for even a [driver's] license you have to bribe

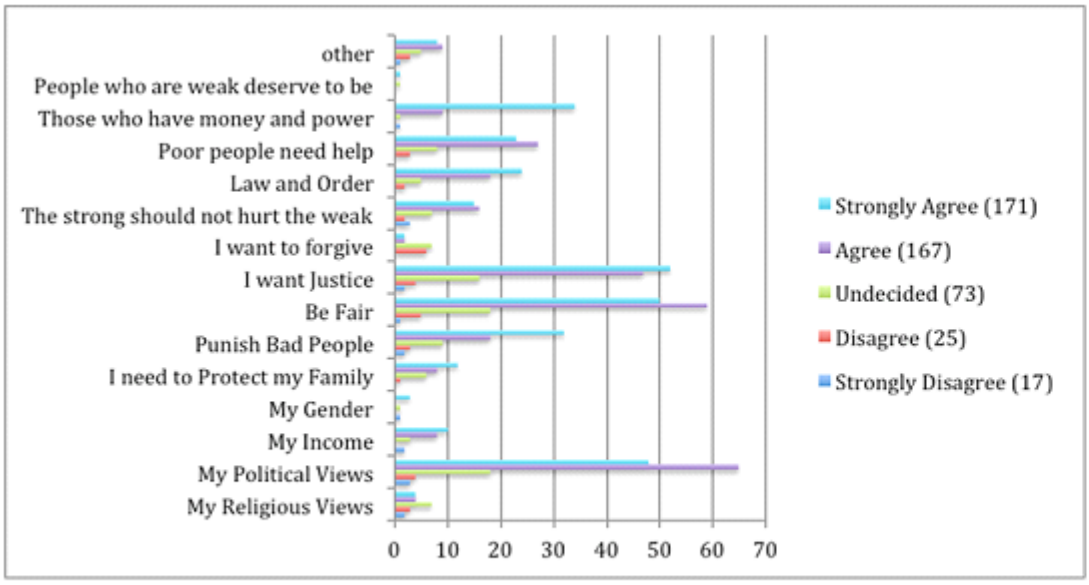



Figure 26. Numerical comparison chart to Table 17 and Figure 24 results. Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following options?

the people" (Appendix A). Perhaps I have introduced corruption as a complication that I may not fully be able to explain here without further study, but Khun Than Lwin and other interviewees did have a common complaint that wealthy Burmese are able to subvert justice.

In the final question presented in this section, I asked respondents whether they would be willing to forgive those who committed human rights abuses in the past. Here, I flipped the question of justice and asked whether forgiveness was an option. Govier (2002) explains Desmond Tutu's assertion that forgiveness could help South Africa avoid prolonging cycles of revenge and violence:

> Tutu's idea is that groups who have been bitterly opposed, who have suffered enormous wrongs at each other's hands, who have long cultivated narratives of

> enmity and hatred, may overcome attitudes of animosity. They're capable of technology and then for giving the wrongs of the past, thus escaping the bitter cycle of violence in which descendants of victims take out revenge on descendants of perpetrators only to create in the process still more victims and an indefinite potential for cruelty and injustice. This idea that forgiveness could play a fundamental role in politics has received considerable attention and interest. (p. 78)

The central theme of this dissertation is that language may rhetorically create change. Govier explains that rhetorical reconciliation and forgiveness are imbued with the idea that people may use language in order to carve a new future out of a history of mutual violence. In Table 19 and Figure 27, I ask respondents whether they would be willing to forgive human rights abusers.

Table 19
*As Your Country Reforms, Should the People Forgive Those Who Committed Human Rights Abuses in the Past?*

| Value | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly disagree | 34.3 | 159 |
| Disagree | 26.4 | 122 |
| Undecided | 17.5 | 81 |
| Agree | 17.1 | 79 |
| Strongly agree | 4.8 | 22 |
| Total | | 463 |

Table 19 and Figure 27 reveal that over 34% of all respondents strongly disagreed with forgiving those who committed human rights abuses in the past. The results strongly correlate with those in Figure 26, where respondents strongly agreed

with trying in court those who committed human rights abuses. With an overwhelming majority of respondents disagreeing with the idea of forgiving those who committed

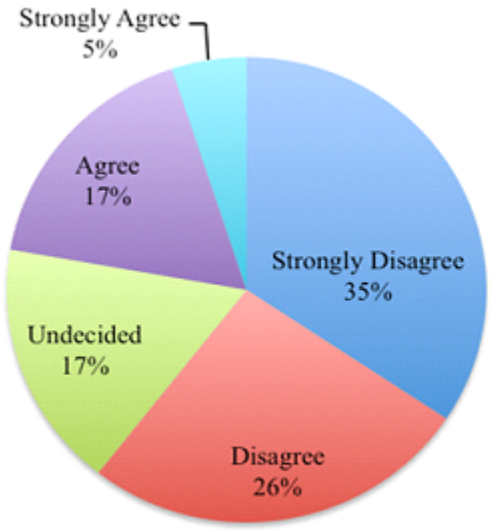



*Figure 27.* As your country reforms, should the people forgive those who committed human rights abuses in the past.

human rights abuses, the results in this survey reveal that, perhaps, reconciliation may not be feasible.

Table 19 also reveals 17% of respondents either were undecided or agreed the forgiveness should be extended to those who committed human rights abuses. Perhaps this is the more surprising result: that so many people would be willing to absolve those who committed torture, rape, and murder of their fellow democracy movement members and leaders. While Table 19 reveals considerable disagreement for the prospect of forgiveness of these individuals, there is still a considerable number of people who view forgiveness as a viable political and social option.

Although I will save my discussion of this survey for the subsequent chapter, Table 19 shows that there is a remarkable degree of, and certainty about, the efficacy of moving away from Burma's violent past. Given the brutality of the military regime, perhaps this should come as no surprise. Although I constructed this survey with the sense that rhetorical reconciliation is connected to the efficacy of a new Burmese democracy, I am sensitive to the pain and hardship endured at the hands of the regime. The results revealed in this section show that the Burmese people feel an injustice has been done to them; and the abuses of a peaceful, nonviolent, and forward thinking social movement may have consequences as Burma forges a new democratic future.

The results in this section reveal that the Burmese people consider human rights abuses as many people would in the United States. Although I refrained from a question that would ask them whether they would take revenge personally, their approval of trying in court those who committed human rights abuses does demonstrate a commitment to the legal justice system. In this way, perhaps there is hope for the ability of democratic movement leaders to motivate Burmese citizens to engage in truth and reconciliation panels, and move from the past in ways that Nelson Mandela espoused. Perhaps my question into whether respondents were willing to forgive was premature, for rhetorical reconciliation requires a process enacted through language. While the desire to seek justice in the courts may point to a disposition of formally executed justice, perhaps Burmese democratic leaders may use the formality of rhetorical reconciliation to avoid future cycles of violence. Realistically, however, the road ahead

for Burma's post-regime government will be fraught with the struggle to overcome the abuses of its past.

## Conclusion

Readers should note that the results revealed in this chapter are incomplete—the results of this survey are offered, in its entirety, in Appendix M of this dissertation. With over 40 questions asked of respondents, the efficacy of presenting all the results in the survey was simply not feasible. However, the results of the survey are striking in the amount of information it offers on the opinions of those who have been marginalized for decades. While there is still much work to be done to ascertain the broad-based opinions of the Burmese people, readers may find the data in Appendix M an interesting insight into both Burmese culture and politics.

The results offered in this chapter reveal some striking contrasts. While many respondents approved of the caustic rhetoric by Bush administration officials, they were largely dissatisfied with the political strategy of the Bush administration. Also, while many respondents approved of the Obama administration's foreign policy strategy, they disapproved of his principled engagement with those accused of human rights abuses. The results of this survey show that most respondents overwhelmingly approved of the speeches and statements offered by U.S. administration officials, yet their satisfaction with the rhetorical strategies of those officials was mitigated by the respondents' sense of changes. Perhaps the rhetorical diplomacy of Barack Obama received broad approval because of his ability to rhetorically form alliances and successfully pressure the regime

to reform, yet his approval with respondents in this survey may be better explained by a sense of changes in Burma. This survey also shows respondents do not approve of a central feature of rhetorical diplomacy, dialogue with regime leaders, as a way to facilitate reform. Limiting engagement with those who have committed human rights abuses limits the appeal of certain aspects of rhetorical diplomacy. Because most members of the regime stand accused of human rights abuses, refusing engagement with these leaders would limit the prospect of reform. This push and pull of foreign-policy strategy and rhetoric offers a more complex view of foreign-policy strategy.

Finally, while respondents overwhelmingly selected Barack Obama as the president who best represents their political values, they also agreed with the statements and speeches of his predecessors. While previous chapters of this dissertation were critical of the rhetorical diplomacy, or lack thereof, of the Clinton and Bush administrations, this survey does reveal that caustic and demonizing rhetoric may find broad-based appeal with democracy movement actors—even if that rhetoric does not bring about reform. However, respondents were not satisfied with the rhetorical leadership of the Clinton and Bush administrations, not because they did not agree with their speeches and statements but because they did not see substantive changes occur during their time in office.

Finally, the results revealed in this chapter show that many Burmese are reluctant to engage with those who have committed human rights abuses in the past. While principled engagement and reconciliation is the foundation of how rhetorical diplomacy operates, respondents seem unwilling presently to engage in the sort of

rhetorical reconciliation instituted in South Africa by Nelson Mandela. This survey thus concludes that Aung San Suu Kyi will face considerable challenges in motivating members of her democratic movement to end the cycle of violence that could eventuate in a post-regime Burma.

While Barack Obama's foreign-policy strategy rests on principled engagement, there should be greater sensitivity to the feelings of the Burmese people themselves. Those who have suffered imprisonment, torture, and rape by the hands of a brutal regime should have a voice in shaping the political future of their country—this also means giving them the chance to seek justice for the many abuses they have suffered.

I close this chapter with this final thought: the strength of this survey is rooted in offering agency and a voice to those who have been silenced for decades. The field research I began in Burma should not stop here. While the United States continues to position itself as a world leader, there should be a greater insistence in ascertaining the opinions of those whom the United States ostensibly defends. More research needs to be completed in countries who are ruled by despotic regimes so that the United States can better represent indigenous values and interests. While I do not criticize the intention of well-meaning American politicians, there is a sort of arrogance in the elimination of the opinion of indigenous peoples as leaders craft their foreign policy calculus.

# CHAPTER 8

## Discussion of Survey and Interview Results and Limitations

In this chapter, I will discuss the implications of the results presented in Chapter 9 of this dissertation. I assert that the results offered in this chapter offer presidential studies, foreign-policy, and rhetoric scholars some new ways of thinking about the implications of rhetorical diplomacy. A discussion of the results of the survey leads me to the limitations of the survey, as well—to the gaps that need to be filled by further research. While there is an abundance of research in the analysis of foreign policy execution and strategy, too little attention has been focused on the opinions of those whom rhetorical diplomacy impacts abroad. It is important to ascertain the opinions of those whom rhetorical diplomacy represents and seeks to persuade so that U.S. administrations may better shape their rhetorical strategies for their audiences. More than only revealing the importance of my survey results, I hope that this research serves to facilitate further scholarship into this ever-important area. In an era where the future of humanity is ever globally interconnected, more of scholarly field research should be conducted of this sort in international rhetorics.

## Presidential Messages Received Broad-Based Approval

One of the more surprising results of this survey was the overall popularity of the speeches and statements made by all three administrations. Although Barack Obama received higher percentages of strong agreement, there was not a particularly significant difference in respondent opinion of U.S. administration speeches and statements. Furthermore, more surprising were the levels of agreement with the caustic rhetoric of

Bush administration officials. This was surprising because it defied how many in the world community felt about Bush's caustic rhetoric.

The fairly consistent levels of agreement of presidential statements and speeches, concerning the Burmese pro-democracy movement, reveal an important insight. In the realm of foreign-policy strategy and execution, the position of the United States toward regime leaders has not differed greatly from president to president. Perhaps respondents do not see policy differences between administration speeches and agreed with the underlying theme of representative government, freedom, and human rights. Simply said, the Burmese people broadly agree with most of the statements concerning Burma made by the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations. While some differences exist in policy between Clinton, Bush, and Obama, they did offer similar positions on human rights—this may explain why Burmese respondents overwhelmingly agreed with the speeches and statements made by all three administrations.

While respondents agreed with many of the speeches and statements made by Clinton and Bush, there were nuanced differences in agreement of the speeches and statements made by the Obama administration. Clinton and Bush articulated their foreign policy by describing how the military junta was a danger to U.S. national security and violated the UN Declaration of human rights. Obama may have received an increased of strong agreement because of his ability to articulate U.S. foreign policy by locating the resonant values of his audience—more than a reaction to violations of human rights, his rhetorical diplomacy then becomes a reflection of Burmese indigenous values of fairness, forgiveness, and the nobility of the human spirit. Either

speaking directly to audiences in Burma, through the BBC & RFA, or through the Internet, Obama crafts messages that broadly rhetorically appeal to the sensibilities of his Burmese audience. U Tin Oo (2014 interview), Vice-Chairman of the National League for Democracy, explains how the Obama Administration was different than previous administrations:

> The message of the United was very powerful and clearly said, "you'd better get the lessons of the other friends." And another time when we were clear with you that to help the economic situation here. On principle we don't like and we are that sort. We want to have a very good economic situation, but from your side you'd better show from your side that you are following the principles of democracy and we must see the progress of the democratic. Then if you lift one opposition to the democracy, then you're going to get help from the United States." So that is the main thing that they said when they came here. He clearly he gave a very clear message! (Appendix G)

Vice-Chairman Oo explains how Obama's straightforward approach to dealing with the regime may have increased the reception of speeches and statements by both regime and social movements audiences. While Clinton and Bush articulate their policies through the lens of U.S. interests, Obama is more of a student of his audience and thus more rhetorically sensitive to the needs and values of his audience.

Obama's rhetorical acumen is rooted in locating the resonant values of his Burmese audience, but surprisingly, the level of agreement with Clinton and Bush speeches and statements is not dramatically different. While Obama's speeches received a greater rate of "strongly agree" than his predecessors, there was overall agreement with all three U.S. presidential speeches and statements. This result shows that perhaps the rhetorical appeal of a presidential speech does not necessary reveal the efficacy of a policy. The strong pathos appeals made by President Bush may have

appealed to an audience angry with their ill-treatment by the regime. Bush's rhetorical strategy reveals that presidential speeches may find approval by an audience—even when that same audience is dissatisfied with his leadership and policy. This was the most puzzling result of the survey: respondents agreed with Bush's rhetoric but then indicated that they were dissatisfied with his policy and overall leadership. It is thus possible for an audience to agree with a president's rhetoric but be unsatisfied with his performance as a leader.

Finally, as I removed the identity of the rhetor from my survey, respondents were asked to rate their agreement with the speech or statement in a rhetorical vacuum of sorts. Respondents were asked to examine a rhetorical artifact beyond the sphere of influence imbued by the personality and reputation of the speaker—beyond the influence of ethos markers. Respondents studied the speech for its content, but ignorant of that speaker's credibility, respondents rated their agreement according to how that speech or statement resonated with their political sensibilities. In some ways, this method takes a speech out of its natural habitat and artificially removes the rhetorical environment in which it was offered. While the Clinton, Bush, and Bush administrations were politically different, they similarly articulated values that appealed to those who suffered oppression and brutality. I argue that the democratic ideals offered by these three presidents are not dramatically different. They espouse hope, freedom, and the dignity of human rights. These ideals are broadly popular and revolutionary in Burma—especially since the Burmese people have been so severely oppressed and brutalized by their government.

### The Constructed Persona of a President

The reception of the statement and speeches may be influenced by the repute of a U.S. president and the overall assessment of a president's leadership. The broad agreement with presidential speeches in some ways comes into conflict with the overall assessment of the leadership of those three presidents. Over 82% of all respondents indicated that Barack Obama best represented their political values. However, respondents broadly agreed with Bush and Clinton administration speeches and statements. Why is there such a disparity between agreement with speeches and assessment of political values?

While the assessment of a speech or statement was made while withholding the identity of the speaker, I asked respondents to assess whether a particular president's political values agreed with their own. Respondents indicated their approval of Obama because they experienced real changes in Burma. Because Clinton and Bush had limited success in Burma, their credibility with the social movement actors suffered. In some ways. Aristotelian rhetoric continues to have value here, for while an audience may agree with a rhetor's statements, that agreement is always constrained by the credibility he constructs. Rhetorical diplomacy is thus impacted directly by the perception of a president's audience that he is either capable of helping changes their circumstances or has changed their circumstances. If the significant reforms in Burma are reversed or free and fair elections are not held as promised, it is doubtful that respondents would hold Obama with as much esteem.

A president must work to retain the approval of his audience from day one in office. Approval and the efficacy of a president's leadership are diametrically connected, and, even if an audience agrees with the arguments made by a president, that agreement is predicated on what that president has *done* for his audience. Even though his arguments resonated with Burmese respondents, the George W. Bush administration proved to be largely incapable to create real changes for Burmese respondents. A president's message may be appealing to an audience, but unless he is able to deliver on promises, an audience will not approve of that leadership.

In some ways, a president's approval in the international arena is not so different than the domestic arena—at least rhetorically. Upon election, a president has a honeymoon period where a constituency gives a president a chance to follow through on campaign promises—if a president consistently fails to bring effective leadership to his administration, his approval ratings fall. Even though a president's speeches and statements may have broad political agreement, an audience's sense that their lives have changed will limit reception of his arguments. While the Burmese people listened for decades to presidents lauding the ideals of a free and fair globalized society, a totalitarian regime brutally oppressed a popular pro-democratic movement. Bill Clinton and George W. Bush rhetorically acted to defend the Burmese pro-democracy movement, but their leadership was ineffectual and did not bring about results. Ultimately, Obama was able to capitalize on his formation of alliances, during opportune moments (*kairos*) of influence, and use those alliances to pressure the regime to reform. Devastated by natural disaster, crippled by sanctions, and increasingly

pressured by allies, Obama had a unique opportunity to pressure Burma to reform. However, it is unlikely that Obama would have been able to successfully pressure Burma to reform without the decades of groundwork of alliances and sanctions created by previous presidents.

Thus, survey respondents may have agreed with the arguments offered by the Clinton and Bush administrations, but that agreement is constrained by the perception that Clinton and Bush did not bring about any change in Burma. All too often, U.S. presidents have spoken about the luminescent ideals of American-led democracy, while failing to protect those whom they rhetorically defend or exploiting those who are too weak to resist their power. The lesson in this result is simple: president's limit credibility speaking insincerely or by proposing policies that are too lofty to be feasible.

**Reception of Messages Versus Foreign Policy Strategy**

The key results of the survey lie in its revelation that the positive reception of a speech is not always connected to a successful foreign-policy strategy. The results reveal that, while the George W. Bush administration speeches received high levels of agreement, respondents were overwhelmingly dissatisfied with his foreign-policy strategy. How is it that respondents can both agree with the articulation of foreign-policy strategy but then criticize the execution of a foreign-policy strategy?

In the realm of international affairs, presidents must do more than pander to their audience. The results of this survey reveal that rhetorical diplomacy is constrained by several factors:

1. An administration's speeches and statements must be rhetorically sensitive in order to broadly appeal to indigenous audiences.
2. Speeches and statements work to forge alliances with regime allies who give material and political support for the resistant regime leader and are in a unique position to pressure that regime.
3. If relevant to domestic concerns, a president's speeches and statements must also agree with the constituency at home.
4. President's may not be able to successfully exert pressure on a regime all of the time, for because there are unique moments where a regime is susceptible to pressure, a president must be able to recognize when those unique opportunities arise.
5. A president's speeches and statements must not work against his ability to engage a regime and reach a political solution.

Rhetorical diplomacy implies that nonviolent measures are first among the options that the United States has to pressure a resistant regime to acquiesce to its demands or to the demands of its people. Although engaging in caustic rhetoric is sometimes popular at home, a president loses his ability to negotiate a political and diplomatic solution if he castigates his negotiating partners. No one is willing to sit down at the bargaining table when he has been maligned only days earlier. Even though it may be true that the interlocutor is guilty of despicable human rights abuses, rhetorical diplomacy must refrain from engaging in such short sighted rhetorical strategies.

This is not to say that caustic and castigating rhetoric is not broadly popular among those who are oppressed by a brutal regime. Indeed, a president may immediately find broad-based support among those who are oppressed by their leaders. Such rhetorical strategies are only effective if they cause the people to rise up and successfully overthrow their regime. An administration must ascertain whether the people are able to defeat and overthrow the combatant-regime. There is certainly a place for caustic rhetoric, which calls a people to act against a despotic regime, yet rhetorical strategies founded in severe reprimands are only effective during a short span of time. If the despotic regime is able to fend off attacks from within and without, a president must decide whether he is willing to use military coercion to compel the resistant regime leaders to acquiesce to the demands of the United States. If the military option is unacceptable, as a foreign policy strategy, a president must then shift to rhetorical diplomacy as a way to pressure a regime to reform. Military options are dependent on the willingness of the constituency versus the cost of such military intervention versus the potential strategic gains. In any case, no leader would be willing to negotiate with a president who openly and publicly maligns him in widely publicized press briefings and speeches. Although regime leaders are sometimes painted as inhumane or barbaric, they are indeed human and susceptible to the same needs and wants of any person. If a president bases his rhetorical attacks on his interlocutor's character, he will find his negotiating partner that much more unwilling.

Finally, focusing on the personality of an interlocutor often compels a regime leader to resist rhetorical diplomacy in order to 'save face.' Once a president openly

maligns a regime leader's character and personality, if there is no equal rejoinder, that regime leader appears weak. While authoritarian regimes rule by the perception of strength, a resistant leader becomes defensive against attacks on that perception of strength. Character attacks of resistant regime leaders do serve to rhetorically weaken the perception of that leader's strength and may serve as an effective catalyst for revolt. However, a president must ascertain whether the social movement, which he has come to aid, is able to successfully overthrow that resistant regime leader. If the answer is no, then the diplomatic president must reorient his rhetorical diplomacy either by facilitating a negotiated hand-off of power or by pressuring leaders to relinquish their hold on power through regime alliances.

The results of this survey are clear: a president must do more than make speeches, which are immediately accepted by his audience. A president must have the foresight and ability to calculate how his rhetorical strategy helps achieve his ultimate goals: the installation of a free and fair democracy ruled by law and governed by the people. Respondents broadly were not satisfied with the Clinton and Bush administrations because they saw little change in their circumstances during their tenure in office. While their speeches and statements certainly had broad-based appeal, respondents were critical that the previous two administrations were unable to successfully help embattled pro-democratic leaders and members. While Clinton and Bush's speeches and statements were widely accepted, the assessment of their performance mitigates any rhetorical achievement they may have had. A diplomatic president must be thoughtful, calculating, and rhetorically sensitive—only a forward

thinking rhetorical diplomacy may ultimately serve those whom the president seeks to aid.

## Letting Go of a History of Violence

In my 2014 interview, Kyaw Thu sums up the opinions reflected in this survey: "In [Cyclone] Nargis and the 2007 revolution the government was inhuman—even they could do it to their own kin, they're inhumane—they neglect all of the people" (Appendix C). Kyaw Thu's assessment of the regime here helps explain survey results, which approved of punishing those who committed human rights abuses. Respondents were broadly in favor of trying those who were accused of human rights abuses in court. Further, respondents did not agree that a U.S. president should engage with leaders accused of human rights abuses. Finally, the survey results show that respondents do not approve of the prospect of forgiving those who committed human rights abuses in the past.

The transition to a representative democracy, founded in free and fair elections, may only peacefully occur if the Burmese people are able to reconcile their history of violence. While it is understandable that those who have experienced imprisonment and torture and murder of their loved ones which seek revenge, vengeance only may further destabilize their country. The results of this survey show that respondents broadly want justice for the abuse that they suffered at the hands of a brutal military regime. The results show that is some resistance, at least within the group of respondents I surveyed, to the idea of reconciliation. Doxstader (2008) explains:

> The question of reconciliation's potential is also the question of how its words have worked to make new, the ways in which the rhetorical performance of reconciliation has opposed historical justifications for violence in the name of opening a time and composing a vocabulary that supported a [re]turn to [civic] friendship. (pp. 284-285)

The survey results reveal that proposing reconciliation will necessarily begin with a debate in Burma whether the rhetorical act of truth and accountability are sufficient to meet the demands for justice by victims.

Reconciliation and forgiveness provide spaces where a people who must co-exist with each other may rhetorically redefine their present and future civic relationship. These spaces are created out of political necessity in order to forge a new future where economic and social development are possible. Govier (2002) explains the relevance of reconciliation:

> In the aftermath of serious conflict, for reconciliation to be lasting, some kind of trust must be built, and for that to happen, attitudes must change—hence the relevance of forgiveness. These are not matters of envisioning the image of Christ on the Cross or seeking eventual union with God. Rather, they are earthly and practical matters: people cannot come together in a lasting way and co-operate as they will need to in a jointly run society if they remain angry, vengeful, suspicious, and insecure. (p. 144)

A post-regime project of justice seeking would cause instability and further collateral damage to civilian life as an embattled military and regime would seek to defend themselves. In many ways, this is the very reason why the regime has not acquiesced to the demands of the pro-democracy members and leaders in the first place. In fear of their lives and the loss of their status, regime leaders and the military have tenaciously clung to power. The desire for justice, although justified in every possible way, will not bring an end to the suffering of the Burmese people; it will only prolong the cycle of

violence. Economic development and building a fully functional civil society require that citizens be willing to work together as a group. Mistrust, resentment, and fear prevent cooperation as division interferes on every level of society, politics, and the economy. Ultimately, persons on opposing sides will at worst commit violence on each other as a way to seek redress or, at the very least, refuse to cooperate with each other.

Aung San Suu Kyi and many pro-democracy leaders are in favor of reconciliation; they saw how Nelson Mandela was able to transition South Africa into a true representative democracy with out embroiling his country in a protracted and violent civil war. The leaders of the democracy movement must make a concerted effort to convince their people to engage in the same sort of truth and reconciliation that Nelson Mandela's government implemented. The desire for revenge is powerful. It is harder still, to nurture the hatred and anger for someone—to keep alive the terrible fantasies of vengeance within one's imagination. Letting go of a history of violence also means moving on to a future of peace. Truth and reconciliation allows both perpetrator *and* victim to move beyond the historicity of violence and construct a rhetorical space where justice is carried out without prolonging a cycle of violence. Note that forgiveness is not quite the same as reconciliation—forgiveness does not require the interaction of the perpetrator. Reconciliation is a rhetorical interaction between victim and perpetrator. Forgiveness is a decision made only by the victim. Govier (2002) explains the connection between forgiveness and reconciliation:

> A wrong or betrayal undermines trust. To regain trust and a sense of security, the injured person needs to overcome her resentment and fear. She needs acknowledgment and reassurance as a basis to forgive and come to trust again,

> seeing the other as one who will not hurt again. To reconcile with her partner, she has to trust him; and to trust him, she has to forgive him. (p. 141)

The results of this survey should serve to alarm my readers, for while the transition to democracy may bring about much needed reforms, my survey results reveal a clear need to address the grievances of the regime's victims. If Burma is to be an outlier among nations with a similar history, the leaders and members of the National League for Democracy must endeavor to restrain the understandable human response to seek justice and revenge. South Africa's truth and reconciliation panels may be a model where victims and perpetrator may regain the necessary trust to establish a stable democracy, growing economy, and more cohesive society.

**Limitations of Conducting a Survey in a Hostile Environment**

With little over 470 respondents completing this survey, the sample size of the Burmese population is relatively small. Even if I had the resources to survey thousands of Burmese citizens, doing field research in a country where the government is hostile is simply unfeasible. Conducting this sort of survey in the United States, I would have been able to better randomize my selection of survey respondents to elevate my ability to produce generalizable results. Sadly, field research in a country controlled by a military regime makes this goal, for the foreseeable future, unrealistic.

Throughout my field research in Burma I faced considerable issues with personally handing out a survey to a population who had lived in fear of their government for decades. As a stranger, handing out a survey that sought to assess their political opinions was not feasible at best and dangerous at worst. I had to be careful in

handing out the survey to avoid putting my own life in danger and those of my respondents. Conducting field research in Burma was unlike any experience I have ever had. Even though I grew up in Israel, a country defined by unrest and violence, the sense of danger in Burma was palpable. Just finding a print shop which I could trust took considerable effort. Just finding a driver to take me to interviews and hand out the surveys to my interviewees took considerable effort. I was also preoccupied with the safety of my respondents—many of whom had spent years in the infamous Insein prison and Yangon for their political beliefs.

Maintaining a low profile was the best method to preserving the security of those who completed my survey. However, it imposed a limitation on my ability to select respondents and then to openly hand out surveys to those respondents. I simply did not have any affordances which would have allowed me to thoughtfully select a population of respondents who were representative of the broader Burmese society. During the planning stages of this study, I had considered hiring a company to survey the members of pro-democratic organizations. After considerable debate with my team of translators, we came to the conclusion that such a project would risk the lives and freedom of respondents. I was therefore constrained in some ways by the regime's continued harassment of pro-democratic leaders and members.

The limitation of conducting field research in a hostile environment was not lost on me. There were many days in Burma where I felt helpless and unable to complete the kind of research that I wanted. I was forced to employ a kind of flexibility, which disagreed with my initial research plan. At every turn, I faced some new adversity

which caused me to alter my plans. From the ethnic tensions and demonstrations in Mandalay to the language barriers I experienced every day, my research plan had to bend or it would break. Readers should recognize the inherent limitations of field research in Burma. I would have liked to have accomplished more, but I was unwilling to do so if that meant putting the lives and freedom of my respondents at risk.

**Gaps (Canyons) in the Data I Leave for Further Research(ers)**

There are considerable gaps left in the research presented in this dissertation. My first concern is that I could not ascertain the opinions held by regime leaders and the military personnel who support them. Although it was simply unrealistic to survey or interview regime leaders, their opinions of presidential speeches and statements are of considerable importance. Rhetorical diplomacy is rooted in a president's rhetorical sensitivity for an audience's needs and values—without ascertaining the rate of regime leader's agreement with presidential speeches and statements, the research presented in this dissertation remains incomplete. The prospect of interviewing those who were accused of human rights abuses would seem unpalatable to even the most adventurous researchers. However, if and when the Burmese government undertakes further and significant political reforms, researchers should conduct a study that features the opinions of former regime leaders and members. Rhetorical diplomacy is predicated on the central belief that presidents may compel resistant regime leaders through their alliance building measures with a regime's allies. Those alliances may be then used, at the most opportune moment, to pressure a regime to reform. Perhaps by interviewing or

surveying regime allies, a researcher may get a better sense of how a president may better build alliances and what may constitute as an opportune moment.

My inability to survey the broader Burmese population also poses considerable limitations on the conclusions brought forth in this dissertation. While such a prospect was unfeasible, and not permitted by the IRB, further research should endeavor to more broadly ascertain the opinions of the Burmese people—not just the members and leaders of pro-democratic organizations.[17] While the National League for Democracy receives broad political support from the common Burmese citizenry, there is a considerable gap left by the lack of research into the opinions of the average Burmese citizen. The results offered in this dissertation are from a sample of pro-democratic members and leaders. It is unrealistic to conclude that the opinions of pro-democratic members and leaders represent the opinions of the broader Burmese society. I come to this conclusion with the recognition that not every person is willing or able to become a political activist. Not everyone is willing to put their own lives and those of their family at risk in order to press the political and social beliefs.

Finally, I avoided exploring ethnic tensions in my survey and interviews—I was advised by my team of translators and advisers that this is a sensitive subject that should not be presently broached. One of the underpinning reasons for the sustained unrest in Burma is rooted in military conflicts between the government and numerous ethnic minorities within Burma. While this survey seeks to ascertain the opinions of

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[17]The IRB imposed limits on how many people I could survey—there was a concern that increased visibility would endanger myself and my respondents.

pro-democratic organizations on the statements and speeches of presidents, I am concerned that the lack of attention spent on the numerous embattled ethnic minorities may be a significant gap in my research. Certainly, the National League for Democracy presently endeavors to draw those ethnic minorities into its party, but it remains to be seen whether this is a feasible political strategy. Further research needs to be conducted into the continuing ethnic tensions which impose a considerable constraint to further political reform within Burma.

Conducting research into violent and dangerous border regions of Burma, where the embattled ethnic minorities reside, may be an unreasonable request for future researchers. However, once peace is achieved in these border regions, ethnographers should ascertain the opinions of these ethnic minorities in order to find whether the speeches and statements of presidents represent their values and political interests. Burma is not a country where homogeneity exists, and the issue of ethnic conflict is particularly significant upon the recognition that Burma is made up of over 10 different distinct ethnicities. Further research into this area would reveal the significance of presidential speeches and statements for the struggle of these embattled minorities.

# CONCLUSION

## Rhetorical Diplomacy and the Burmese Democracy Social Movement

This dissertation explores how a U.S. president rhetorically constitutes his audience, for the challenges of persuading international audiences and an awareness of those challenges may aid a president to construct rhetorically persuasive discourse. A presidency does not exist in a vacuum; the rhetorical efforts of previous administrations influence how presidents redefine their interaction with national and international constituencies. Throughout this analysis, I examined the theoretical underpinnings of rhetorical diplomacy in order to demonstrate how alliance building, *kairos*, and engagement may provide nonviolent methods of dealing with regimes who refuse to hold free and fair elections, are guilty of human rights abuses, and who selfishly cling to power at the expense of their country's well-being.

Many modern civilizations recognize that their future prosperity is predicated upon positive economic, political, and social relationships with their neighbors. In an age where international image directly impacts a nation's prosperity, rhetoric naturally becomes the preferred method of contact with the world community. Presidential power in an age of increasing globalization also raises important questions of the prerogatives of U.S. presidents to influence global perceptions of the United States. While Congress has little power to interfere in international affairs, presidents are thus able to influence global perceptions of U.S. identity and, consequently, have a direct impact upon national security, commercial interests, and, ultimately, how the world perceives the American people.

Using varying levels of diplomatic engagement, from Secretary of State to low level ambassadorial personnel, provides presidents with the opportunity to persuade leaders how they may directly benefit from reform. While there may be some sense, on the part of regime actors, that they could benefit by reforming, their resistance to relinquishing power in exchange for unspecified returns ignores their self-servicing motives. Simply, regime leaders would have not sought power, brutally clung to that power, and chose to violate the values held by their people if they were not motivated by self-interest. Thus, rhetorical diplomacy specifies rewards in return for reform and is more able to pursue other avenues of self-interest. While rhetorical diplomacy persuades a universal audience of regime allies, the final turn of diplomatic strategy must include actually engaging the regime. A president speaks to his universal audience in order to pressure a regime to engage and acquiesce; yet it is unlikely that regime leaders will seek out a president—that responsibility falls to the president.

Rhetorical diplomacy should choose to criticize the *actions* of a regime, rather than the personality defects of regime leaders. Criticizing actions or situations (although they have been perpetrated by the regime) allows negotiating partners to save face internationally. Further, as a rhetorical strategy, the criticism of character leaves an interlocutor with little room for change: for while one may alter one's actions, the character of a person is intransigent. While Bill Clinton and George W. Bush rhetorically positioned Burmese leaders as criminals or as thugs to elevate the visibility of regime oppression of democratic movement actors, Barack Obama criticized the actions of the regime as a way to maintain the visibility of the Burmese democracy

movement. Castigating a person's character is much like assessing their psychological defects—it offers no solution, no way out, for there is no possible change in a person controlled by their aberrant psychological defects.

This dissertation sought to reveal how the U.S. President is able to capitalize on his rhetorical resources to pressure resistant dictators to reform. However, a president's influence is only realized through the aid of an established democratic social movement. Thus, the United States is unable to force change, through rhetorical diplomacy, without principle actors with whom they may assist. Without a defined social movement to assist, the United States may only be seen as intrusive and operating for its own personal gain.

Because of globalization and the economic and strategic competition that it brings, democratic social movements will have greater say in the affairs of their government as they draw in world attention. A struggling social movement which encounters an armed, powerful, and violent government may appeal to the world, through visuals and speeches, and gain legitimacy that would otherwise not be possible if they were isolated within their native country. Through their use of media, leaders of social movements may be able to shift the balance of power because of their ability to scare off or force transnational companies to abandon investment with regimes whose actions may give those corporations bad publicity.

This dissertation also concludes that the U.S. defeat of the Soviet Union also marked an end to bipartisanship between the Democratic and Republican parties, as well as between Congress and the executive branch. The existential threat posed by the

Cold War elevated the importance of cooperation between both Democratic and Republican parties, as well as Congress and the Executive Branch. The rhetorical presidency, in this way, was harmed by the lack of the common enemy of the Soviet Union—which gave the president credibility and enhanced opportunities to persuade both Congress and the public of his policies. The existential threat of the Soviet Union raised the importance of a president's leadership, extended through his ability to speak and be heard, and facilitated unity and bipartisanship. During the struggle against the Soviet Union, there was a sense that open hostility was both unpatriotic and undermined the national security of the United States was seen as having fractured leadership. The hostility, which Clinton experienced after the election of a Republican Congress in 1994, posed a serious challenge to the execution of foreign policy initiatives, as Congress sought greater authority in foreign affairs.

While the endurance of his globally interdependent vision may not have been wholly realized during his administration, Bill Clinton's leadership in the formation of trade pacts, international institutions, and his commitment engagement has had a lasting impact in the development of rhetorical diplomacy. Clinton's leadership in the transition from Cold War containment policies was important to a new world community whose economic partnerships hoped to facilitate democracy. Indeed, the central feature of this dissertation, that rhetorical diplomacy may compel resistant regimes to change its policy, would be impossible without an interdependent economic system. Such a system enables the force of punitive sanctions, while facilitating reform through the attraction of the wealth that international trade creates. Ultimately,

Clinton's efforts in the globalization of economic trade has given the U.S. presidency leverage in rhetorical diplomacy.

The efficacy of rhetorical diplomacy remains in how the president most effectively compels an audience to pressure a resistant regime to reform. There are *moments*, *kairos*, of rhetorical diplomacy where presidents are better able to forge effective alliances in pressing a regime to reform. The *kairos* of the Clinton administration came as Burma was invited into ASEAN in 1997—the United States could have threatened to sanction ASEAN or withhold the implementation of economic trade pacts if Burma was allowed to join their association. Prevented from joining ASEAN or receiving pressure from ASEAN leaders, Burma may have been forced to reform.

This dissertation also reveals how the flaws of President Bush's military intervention tarnished the credibility for U.S. leadership in the world community. This strategy failed when Bush significantly altered the military's objective from eliminating existential threats to retooling the military to nation-building missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. As the fiscal constraints expanded with his military goals, so too did world disdain for this controversial policy. As the United States became an occupying force in Iraq and Afghanistan, international audiences viewed the United States as nation-building rather an attempt to protect its national security.

Under the leadership of George W. Bush, the United States lost its prestige by defying the opinions of the world community, and through gruesome visuals of civilian causalities and videos of moral failings—all of which played over world news networks

on the Internet and TV. Bush's goal to win over the opinion of the world community through the results of his policies did not work and his military adventures only served to diminish U.S. capacity for rhetorical diplomacy. Perhaps Bush did not recognize the importance of forming alliances. However, rhetorical diplomacy depends upon the perception of goodwill (*ethos*). If Bush sought to retain the status of the United States as 'leader of the free world,' he needed to cultivate friendships with allies, ameliorate hostility from enemies, and rhetorically position the United States as a leader, which does not use its power to pursue hegemony. In the final analysis, President Bush needed greater rhetorical sensitivity in assessing the needs, values, and attitudes of the international audience which he ostensibly sought to protect.

While it is premature to conclusively determine how Obama's foreign policy philosophy will ultimately change American security and financial prosperity, my analysis of his rhetorical diplomacy works explain how Obama has been able to construct a positive image of the United States. Obama demonstrates an ability to reveal virtuous features of American identity through his ability to rhetorically engage with audiences. By constructing speeches which forge a common human identity, Obama rhetorically constructs a worldview for his global audiences where America and the international community may coexist peacefully.

This dissertation examines how the diplomatic presidency is key to fostering international cooperation. The future peace of humanity rests upon rhetorical interaction, for while friendship is forged by the recognition of similarity, violence is propagated by the belief that differences are irreconcilable. Exemplified in his speeches

to the world community, Obama's rhetoric reveals that the construction of public memory becomes a constitutive and pivotal element in international cooperation. Through his rhetorical diplomacy, Obama has rhetorically positioned the United States as a virtuous and valuable friend unto the nations. Ultimately, Barack Obama has invested himself fully with the presidential powers of rhetorical diplomacy, not by brandishing military superiority, but by creating lasting alliances with world community leaders.

My analysis of Obama's rhetorical diplomacy reveals how he consistently endeavors to distance his administration from the George W. Bush administration. In order to regain U.S. international credibility, Obama often argued how George W. Bush did not represent U.S. identity. By indicating how some actions of his predecessor conflict with American values, Obama's campaign to disassociate U.S. foreign relations from the Bush administration renewed multilateral. By eliminating a significant source of contention between America and the world community, Obama has rhetorically repositioned the United States as a leader whose presence in the world community has universal appeal.

The junta's imprisonment of democratic activists and its unabashed defiance of Burmese voters has been denounced by Western governments for decades. This dissertation reveals that rhetorical diplomacy should be conducted through an understanding of the contextual environment that imposes limitations on how foreign powers may interact with indigenous entities—even authoritarian regimes. This is especially true in Asia, where financial alliances, cultural affinity, and poor historical

relations with the West limited the impact of the response of the United States and other Western nations. Indeed, the Bill Clinton and George W. Bush administrations provide a juxtaposition for how Obama has conducted U.S. foreign policies with Burma and other ASEAN members.

The *kairos* of the Saffron Revolution and Cyclone Nargis, which occurred shortly before Obama's election, created an opportune moment where he was able to successfully pressure Burmese regime leaders. What is perhaps most hopeful is that the regime is open to outside election monitors for the 2015 elections (at the time of writing this dissertation, the exact date of the election has not been set). And while the mischance of the 1990 elections may occur again, current international norms will make it difficult for the regime to repeat this past abuse of power again. However, the success of the elections depends on the sustained engagement from the Obama administration, for no other political entity may encourage the regime to persist in its political reforms. In this way, Obama's rhetorical diplomacy has become a political center of gravity within Burmese politics, and as the NLD's primary foreign ally, the United States may be better to influence the positive outcome of these elections than ever before.

The Burmese pro-democracy movement should be relevant to social movement and presidential studies scholars and those interested in the process of attaining representative government, for Burmese democracy movement leaders and members show us how a weak majority may contest against a superior military minority. This dissertation represents my hope to shed light in an area of rhetorical diplomacy, which seems to offer presidents nonviolent alternatives to pressuring resistant regimes to

institute reforms. As I sifted through the hundreds of texts that analyzed the foreign policies and diplomatic efforts of Clinton, Bush, and Obama, I found a common theme: many authors did not ascertain how indigenous peoples felt about a president's foreign policy—even when indigenous people were impacted directly by particular presidential decisions and strategies. I thus decided to take up the challenge to survey the members and leaders of the pro-democratic organizations which the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administration often defended.

Even though I was severely limited in my capacity to access the broader Burmese population, the results in this survey should be of considerable importance to social movement scholars, political scientists, and those interested in the project of democratic reform within dictatorships. I recognize that the Burmese democracy movement may, on the surface, offer little strategic importance to the broader world community; yet scholars should note that this nonviolent social movement was able to compel a military regime to enact significant political reforms. Freeing over 10,000 political prisoners from Insein prison, the Burmese regime has embarked on a path toward reform. The idea that a small and embattled social movement, which had little external material support, was able to successfully motivate their military leaders to reform is remarkable. Further research should be conducted into how this social movement was able to sustain its political presence in Burma. The Burmese pro-democracy movement is an example of how the will of the people may succeed against the power of a militarily superior force—and they succeeded without the use of violence.

This dissertation also reveals there may be a promising future for a post-Burma regime, for the persistent commitment to nonviolent protest Burmese pro-democracy movements may serve to limit future violence against those who have committed human rights abuses. While many respondents are unwilling to forgive those who have committed human rights abuses, their consistent dedication to nonviolence holds considerable promise for Burma's future. Few other nations have borne a social movement with such considerable resistance to using violence as a method of achieving political goals. The Burmese pro-democracy movement stands out as an example of how those who have committed themselves to peace can facilitate even the most brutal of regimes to reform.

The research results presented in this dissertation reveal a remarkable disparity between the agreement of a presidential speech and respondents' satisfaction with a president. While respondents may broadly approve of a president's rhetorical actions, that approval is constrained by the perception of changes on the ground. Empty promises offered in presidential speeches and statements may only serve to undermine U.S. rhetorical diplomacy. Presidents should therefore endeavor to undertake rhetorical actions which are effective.

The results offered in this dissertation also reveal that, despite the political differences of presidential rhetors, the articulation of democratic values is widely appealing to Burmese audiences. While many in the international community criticized the Clinton and Bush administration for their inability to bring about significant democratic reforms, the results in this study reveal a broad-based agreement with the

values that Clinton and Bush espoused. Although Barack Obama garnered significantly stronger agreement in his speeches and statements, there was not considerable disparity between the agreement of all three presidents.

More scholarship needs to be conducted in Burma, a country that borders India, China, and Thailand, and will have considerable strategic interest to the United States in the near and far future. As a country at a crossroads both regionally and politically, Burma should interest scholars who wish to understand how words sustain the life of a movement, how an oppressed people may be victorious against a superior enemy, and how an idea is more powerful than a gun. The Burmese democracy movement remains a lasting testament to the endurance of the idea that citizens retain the right of self-governance. While authoritarian regimes endeavor to quash their opposition—the ideals of democracy will persist in creating new social movement actors who will choose to take up the cause of freedom.

Perhaps, in my final analysis, policy differences do not matter as much to international audiences as they would domestically. What does matter, however, is how presidents employ rhetorical diplomacy in order to achieve feasible policy goals. The results presented in this dissertation reveal that, while speeches and statements may be popular among international audiences, a president must do more than respond to an audience. As international leadership takes shape through the speeches and statements that presidents offer to their international constituencies, their rhetorical actions must be strategically formulated to achieve goals that are doable and make sense.

When the president speaks abroad, he locates those U.S. democratic values that broadly resonate with his international audience. Even though the George W. Bush administration was course and inelegant rhetorically, he articulated democratic values that were broadly appealing to Burmese respondents. Bill Clinton could not have been politically more different than George W. Bush, but similarly approved of his statements and speeches. In some ways, the Clinton administration had a rhetorical style that was as caustic sometimes as his successor—his speeches and statements, directed at the junta, were strongly worded and often characterized the junta as criminals. However, he offered particular steps that the junta could undertake in order to come back into the good graces of the U.S. government. George W. Bush, on the other hand, castigated the military regime and vocalized his intention to increase punitive measures against the regime if they did not reform. Ultimately, Barack Obama capitalized on the rhetorical landscape created by the previous two administrations and was able to successfully pressure Burmese regime leaders to institute reforms. Obama's rhetorical diplomacy of alliance building and engagement took advantage of the *kairos* created by the Saffron Revolution and Cyclone Nargis and successfully negotiated an end to the cycle of regime oppression of democracy movement leaders and members.

Rhetorical diplomacy becomes a nexus point that constructs global identity not predicated upon differences, but through a sense of what constitutes a universal audience. As the United States remains distant and independent of global communities, it may not construct and manage potential rhetorical power among world communities. Rhetoric diplomacy does much to explain how U.S. presidents may further their U.S.

interests by increasing the level of engagement and cooperation with world institutions. By creating alliances with the international community, setting political agendas, and using the immense economic power of the United States, presidents may shape an interconnected global community through rhetorical strategies that are imbued with the significance of a shared human condition.

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## APPENDIX A

### Transcript of Interview With Khun Than Lwin

06-29-2014 Thangyi, Shan State, Burma

Author's Note: Khun Than Lwin is Chairman of the NLD Shan State.

**Aaron Little**: Hold on I need to write down his name in my book.

**Victor** (the Translator): try to plain okay? We people are stone age people.

**Aaron Little**. You're not stone age people.

**Victor**: We are still going back. Maybe we are 100 B.C. people.

**Aaron Little**: 1960! {laughs}

**Victor**: We are under the government so we are not very open - we need to catch up on the BBC view, Sky News, Sports News and all of this.

**Aaron Little**: I want to ask him why he became involved in Pro-Democracy. I ask everyone what's the reasons why he became interested.

**Khun Than Lwin**: The reason he became involved is because 1988 revolution people and the main thing - at the time he was quite young but this government announce that this money is not legal anymore: 90 kyat notes, 5 kyat notes - this is the reason why. At the time he was just 19 years old - that's the main thing he would like to take part in the revolution and all, these organizations and all.

**Aaron Little:** He's been involved in pro-democracy for a long time, what does he think about the movements and how successful they've been.

**Khun Than Lwin**: You want to know how accurate they were.

**Aaron Little**: I want to know about the movement toward democracy.

**Khun Than Lwin:** The people win election - nearly 80% is on our side. The people are still afraid. We people are still living in fear - you read about the time under Ne Win right?

**Aaron Little:** Oh yes.

**Khun Than Lwin:** Well that's the main thing, we are still Afraid. A person who wants to vote may be afraid of a soldier or a police officer, who will come to squeeze you. They dare not to vote clearly, frankly, or bravely.

**Aaron Little:** So they're not voting.

**Khun Than Lwin:** At the moment they are still voting.

**Aaron Little:** We dare not to vote in an open place - we have to vote secretly.

**Khun Than Lwin:** I have to ask you, in your hometown, if you have to make a vote, can you vote any time frankly - and everyone can see. Is that right?

**Aaron Little:** No, you go into a little box with a cover and you press a button for the person that you want and that's it. And no one sees ever.

**Khun Than Lwin:** I know, I know - you press one, two three, four button and that's it? We have to make a tick on a piece of paper.

**Aaron Little:** It's only in the last ten years that we've started voting with a computer.

**Khun Than Lwin**: Just ten years ago.

**Aaron Little**: It was by paper before.

**Khun Than Lwin:** Like us?

**Aaron Little**: Yes.

**Khun Than Lwin:** The coming election next year in 2015, I'm sure NLD will be the winner. [Victor says he is not a member of NLD]

**Aaron Little:** Will the people be afraid to vote for NLD in 2015?

**Khun Than Lwin:** Here there are a lot of tribal people. They have a lack of education - they dare not to say anything. They think that the Army is still going strong. The reason is that they would like to not cooperate with these people. They are a little bit scared I think. But in the end I think, the people hate these guys.

**Victor:** I take a newspaper and these are a shit newspaper propaganda. The reason I take, some reason I would like to read it. Why are they writing it - these are all trash.

**Khun Than Lwin:** The reason why the people are scared. Five or six years ago, five people were sent to jail. They are already released, just two weeks ago one of the members were shot. We are the same tribe. [victor, the translator and Khun Than Lwin talk for awhile].

**Victor:** Do you know about the news spreading about how this government is taking lands from the people? Those who was killed and caught, was the member of the NLD, and was the owner of a farm - would like to get the land back. The man behind the curtain is still the government. They are still using the British ways you see, of divide and conquer. The main reason is, the land they were taking, the merchant and business man, the farm workers are scared that the same thing will happen. If they frankly support the NLD, their business will be ruined or may come by this government. You understand?

**Aaron Little:** Yeah.

**Khun Than Lwin**: You understand?

**Aaron Little**: Yes.

**Khun Than Lwin:** The Main thing that this government want is, they don't want NLD to win. And that's why the main thing, and the second thing is they don't to give the land back. The cronies are taking all of the land. The farmer, they have no job! The main thing this government has done - the one who was murdered recently, the farmer-the landowner, they are also member of the NLD. They would like to be a member, but this is a big party - this party will sit on their side. The reason why this government slaughter them, is that they don't want to give the land and they want the people to be scared. If you're a member of NLD you will be killed. There is some amount of brainwashing here.

**Aaron Little:** In America, political parties have ways of communicating with its members. We hold rallies and we either call up people, or we email messages. I get messages from Barack Obama - every day. Too many emails!

**Victor**: As far as I'm concerned we never speak with any government authority.

**Aaron Little:** What technologies does he use to organize his members, to spread the message of the party, what kind of communication technology - facebook, social media, email, phone, talking.

**Khun Than Lwin:** Township officer - youth organizer. [woman walks into room]

**Victor:** She just came back from China.

**Aaron Little:** Please have a seat.

**Victor**: Just now they asked me how do they organize people - what kind.

**Khun Than Lwin:** They don't have too much technology. The main thing they have to get messages to Radio Free Asia and BBC Asia.

**Aaron Little:** He gives messages to BBC and RFA?

**Khun Than Lwin:** Yes, that's right. There are reporters. They are using email, they also use facebook.

**Aaron Little:** What about twitter?

**Khun Than Lwin:** No one is using twitter. They don't want to everything to the people. Some of it they have to keep top secret.

**Aaron Little:** Yes, I understand. Well, the success of every party is its ability to communicate - that's why I'm asking. I know in Yangon they hand out DVDs at their office.

**Victor**: Oh yeah, we too – we've got all of these. Six or seven months ago we talked frankly with a forum abroad. The DVD was released - everybody know it.

**Aaron Little**: I'd like to know also, that if you don't have any technology to spread the message. What things would you want if you could have it?

**Khun Than Lwin:** They want people who could come and teach them how to use the big technology.

**Aaron Little:** Like computers?

**Khun Than Lwin:** We have computers and phone.

**Aaron Little**: So what technologies does he want to learn?

**Khun Than Lwin:** To communicate with the whole world. They want people to come and teach them. They need training how to handle this equipment.

**Aaron Little:** I'll ask my University.

**Victor**: We can send message to you? Email or something like that?

**Aaron Little:** So during 1988, the failed elections - when NLD won and then the election was stolen, Throughout those crisis days, how aware was he of the speeches and the statements by the U.S. president about Burma.

**Victor**: Did he listen?

**Aaron J. Little:** Yeah, how did listen? Did he know there were speeches? Did he know that the American president.

**Victor**: Who was the President at that time?

**Aaron**: Bill Clinton.

**Khun Than Lwin:** At the moment of President Obama speeches, in that speech he said 'equal right to everybody whether you are poor or rich.' I listened to this carefully - no one is above the law. Above the law there are so many generals who are corrupt people. Equal rights is just a dream, we are still living in a dreamworld. There are no protections of the law.

**Aaron Little:** No one is protected by the law?

**Khun Than Lwin:** Yeah, everybody is scared of these military. They are really cruel people.

**Victor**: I am Karen. One of the generals stepped on the Karen flag with his feet - I feel hate, I feel horrible, he is a really asshole. Why does he do these stupidities?

**Khun Than Lwin:** We have the same feeling. Everybody is scared of these military guys. They are checking every movement of this party. They shadow us, 24hrs [a day] they are watching us. The other day in the Myanmar protests - 22 protests in Thangyi. There was a well known writer, he is a well know advocate, he is sharing a message to live peacefully with our ethnic [peoples]. Whether you are a Christian, Muslim, Hindu, we have to live together peacefully. He is giving this speech and those guys come in, they indirectly come in and give some disturbance you see? [we] have organized a lot of Muslim and Tribes - they are not military guys but they are University students who they've organized. You know this country, you've heard about Aesop Fairy Tales? There are too many thieves. If you want to be a good businessman you have to bribe everybody. For even a license. You have to bribe the people.

**Aaron Little:** [they hand out sodas] Oh! Thank you.

**Victor**: I said I keep it [cans of soda] for my kids.

**Aaron Little**: Well yes, I think the kids will like it!

**Victor**: Can you guess my age? If you can guess my age, I give you full respect.

**Aaron Little**: 63?

**Victor**: Ah! You were right! 64! You heard about the Beatles - I'm 64! I will try to guess your age?

**Aaron Little:** Sure, okay.

**Victor**: Maybe 36 or 37.

**Aaron Little:** Ah very good 37. We're both very good, we could work at a circus guessing age! [laughs] So, I want to ask him also, how has he gotten some support from the U.S. government. I know Barack Obama came and spoke at Yangon University. Are there other things the U.S. can do to help.

**Victor**: You mean you are going to give him help?

**Aaron Little:** Well, two: has he gotten help and how can we give him more?

**Victor**: He is asking what kind of support he already has.

**Aaron Little:** Well, there's support through speeches, there's support through pressuring the government to allow the NLD to operate within the country. Does he think the U.S. government has helped him operate as a political organization more easily?

**Victor**: You mean the U.S. embassy?

**Aaron Little:** Not just the embassy, the government in general - has it become easier to be the NLD because of the U.S. government pressure?

**Khun Than Lwin:** Yes, things have changed 100%! They are giving a lot of provocation that Indians and Muslims come and support us and that we're getting some Indian and Muslim countries to support us. They are spreading false rumors.

**Aaron Little:** Who are spreading it?

**Khun Than Lwin:** This government indirectly. This country has about five religion: Buddist, Christian, Hindus, Muslim, and there is a Natz. Natz is a small god worshipping the tree and the monkeys. It legal to worship. The NLD accepts this religion to live peacefully but this government using indirectly to Muslim creating Muslim religion with NLD so that the people will fear - divide and rule, yeah, yeah.

**Aaron Little:** They are creating the rumor that the NLD are Muslim?

**Victor**: No, No, No, He [points to a larger dark skinned man] is a not a member, but he helps NLDs. I am not a member but I come and help them if they need help. We got to help each other - we got to be standing on the top, otherwise they go and invade us. The main thing that this government wants to do - they are tricky. Maybe we can say they are cunning fox. These people are really cruel.

**Aaron Little:** President Thein Sein has, from the outside - from the United States, it looks like things are changing, it looks like he has made many reforms. What does he think about the reforms that have been made or maybe haven't.

**Victor:** He's just a puppet! The man beside the curtain is somebody else. These military guys are just controlling him. He's just a puppet.

**Aaron Little:** But there have been changes, right?

**Khun Than Lwin:** The topics in the headline, it says we are reforming. We are correcting, we are changing. But in reality there is no change - it is the same old thing. The government is still lying and cheating - they don't care about the people. They are scared of the world, of Europe, they are scared of sanction that will come again - they are scared of it.

**Aaron Little:** So was it a good idea to take the sanctions away?

**Victor**: Uh Aaron, may I call you friends, comrades - amigo?

**Aaron Little:** Amigo, yes. [laughs]

**Khun Than Lwin:** This government in the Kachin State, Karen State they are still fighting. They want them to fight - they say there is a lot of reform and change but one thing they don't care about are people. They would like their business to run smoothly. There are a lot of crony who get richer and richer. They are squeezing the people more and more - they are charging for electricity more and more. Water system - if you use a lot of water they are charging a lot.

**Khun Than Lwin:** If you want to download, you have to wait a long time!

**Aaron Little:** Long time!

**Khun Than Lwin:** If you want to download a song, for example, you here about the song 21 Guns [Green Day]? It's a very famous song - just one year ago it was a top hit.

**Aaron Little:** Here?

**Victor**: Yeah Here - everyone was listening to it. You can listen to it on your phone. Your phone is from abroad - not like us.

**Aaron Little:** You can't use the Internet?

**Khun Than Lwin:** If anyone wants to use the Internet they have to get up at 3am to download. If somebody sends a message video file. You Americans are giving training courses, but this president said that he want one of the channel from America from Thailand for these people to use the political training. If you go from one town to one town. People can't go here and there - it costs a lot of money to go from place to one place. The main thing is, that the American come and give a political training - the people here can't spread out because they have it in their head but they can't share it to other people. For one reason, its very hard. We people are weak in political affairs, especially ordinary people. So maybe we have a lack of political ideas.

**Aaron Little:** I'd like to know what his opinion of Barack Obama and Hillary. How do you think they've been helpful to NLD, to democracy?

**Khun Than Lwin:** I like the two parties, whether they are democratic.

**Aaron Little:** Did he like George Bush as well?

**Khun Than Lwin:** Yes I like. You learn about that typhoon five years ago - Nargis? A lot of our people died, you know, but they hide it. They don't release it because they hide the news. Because they hide the news, although they received the news that there would be a big hurricane that Nargis Typhoon is coming, but they don't release the news to the people. They don't care about the dead people. This government won't people at all - they were going to keep lying and cheating and keep on spreading propaganda: that they are taking care of the people, that there are a lot of changes, a lot of people are on their side - but side is all false news. The [South] Korean ship collapse two months ago - you hear about that South Korea ship.

**Aaron Little:** Oh yes, yes, yes.

**Khun Than Lwin:** Over two hundred school children pass away you know? And then prime minister has to step off of his post. Here a lot of people died and no one stepped off of his post. A lot of people they are killing day and night. You know about the Kachin State? The Kachin really hate the Burmese terribly because the people are suffering a lot- the children have to stay without shelter, without blanket in the winter weather and they don't have enough food. Because of war. The constitution voting - they make a constitution, but they said all the people agreed with it. They make the dead body. They are using the dead bodies that these dead bodies recommended the constitution [I think he's saying here that dead people are being used to cast votes]. Everybody knows it!

**Victor**: Aaron, listen. The main thing is that, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi - she's a brave lady. And one thing she can speak six languages German, Italian, all of these languages. As for me I can only speak a little bit of English, that's all.

**Aaron Little:** Oh you speak English very well!

**Victor**: I'm going to hit the ceiling!

**Aaron Little**: My last question is: In 2015 you have a new election. What can the U.S. do to help Burma have free and fair elections?

**Khun Than Lwin:** Whether there is a free election or not, we want all the world's people to come and see whether it's legal or not, free election or not. They are using the same tricks. They want the other countries to come and see. Not just the U.S. - all democracy country should be participate. We have to go and watch all of the elections. They only have two persons to come and check the elections - how can that be for ONE STATE!

**Aaron Little:** Two, for all of Shan?

**Khun Than Lwin:** Only if they have the Wisdom like God, will they be able to come and check whether they're real, whether they're fair or square. Very few people observer come here - the more they come, the more our people will know whether it's a free election or not. The observers should come more. You people should press for more observers to come to see if it's a free election or not.

**Aaron Little**: Here's the thing, if the world sees that the elections are not fair, are not fair. What should the U.S. do? Let's say they rob a second time.

**Victor**: Obviously their second of the Nobel Prize Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, The Lady. The main thing she is too smart - you have the cronies getting scared you see?

**Aaron Little:** If the NLD loses because the elections are not free, because of cheating, what should the U.S. Government do? How should we respond?

**Khun Than Lwin:** Even the former officer they support this [NLD?] party. They have the heart to support the NLD, but they are still watching.

**Aaron Little:** If the USDP cheats again, should we put more sanctions, I've heard some opinions that we should send our fleet.

**Victor**: To wipe out this country? To wipe out this Nay Pyi Daw.

**Aaron Little:** That's the thing: how should America respond if the 2015 elections isn't fair - what should we do?

**Khun Than Lwin:** The more you make a sanction - the people have to suffer. Ordinary people suffer - they would like to break up. The more you make a pressure on them.

**Victor**: You're saying how can the U.S. help those.

**Aaron Little:** Well, let's say before there were not free elections, so Bill Clinton and George W. Bush put a lot of sanctions okay. Let's say this next time - the sanctions are going away right. Let's say the election are not free - what should do. Should we put sanctions again, should we come in our army, or just do nothing? I want his idea.

**Khun Than Lwin:** For forty or fifty years - you Americans have been giving helicopters to get rid of the opium. They change the color into military colors and they are using them for the military purpose.

**Victor**: They are really a shit head. Aaron, we people are still suffering. My daughter is trying to go to law school. Another daughter can't finish her computer school because I can't support her. One of them passed the ten grade but can not attend the university because he got into an argument with the dean, you know the dean of the University, my son argue with her so there's a real problem. This country, in every place they would like to rule like a dictator.

**Aaron Little:** What was his idea for U.S. response?

**Khun Than Lwin:** They want prevention before they lie. The main thing is three points: One points is, you should support a lot of media. They want to change in the military because you Americans giving instruction and some small training already. We want the military people to change. You can't change things overnight because there are a lot of problem in this country: the ethnic cleansing, there are a lot of war, with Arakan base and religion problems and all. They are the one who create this. They want the Muslim

and the Buddhist to get into a fight so they can say this country is not stable - we will come a rule again. Same old story! We are afraid that things are going on like that. There is a dangerous rumor being spread around in this whole tribe people. We plant garlics and tea leaves - the rumor is spreading that is opium.

**Victor**: He's just joking, he's kidding!

**Khun Than Lwin:** Your auntie is more higher than us, you should come and see at least before the action. You've got to observe what's going on - the vote is much better for us. You can give instructions, you can give ideas, advice. How can you get all of the views?

**Aaron Little:** Well, I think there are plans to send many observers here. Jimmy Carter is involved.

**Victor**: Oh yes! Sometimes, he's a part-time carpenter I heard, looking after the houses, but now he's too old to be a carpenter.

**Aaron Little:** But he is an elections observer.

**Victor**: Oh yeah, he is a good hearted president, I know him well.

**Aaron Little:** He organizes the election observes in the world - he's the guy that organizes.

**Khun Than Lwin:** You are the first scout here. You Americans need to come and visit to Shan State.

**Aaron Little:** Tell him, I'm writing a book and that's exactly what I will tell Americans to do. The last thing is: what would he like to say to the American people. Anything.

**Victor**: Just a joke but we are the Shan State. We want our Shan State to be part of the American States [laughs].

**Khun Than Lwin:** Like you, we want the same thing. To be free, to be able to speak freely, or talk freely. We appreciate the American way of thinking, your ideas - we have the same feeling. We want to be like you - same thing we would like to have it. We can be the fifty-one state,

**Aaron Little:** [laughs] I'll ask Congress! [laughs] I'll let you know!

**Khun Than Lwin:** The Chinese have already taken state. One state already. If your American won't help our Burmese people, our Burmese country will be part of North Korea. Birds of a feather flock together - you know it?
**Aaron Little**: Yeah.

**Khun Than Lwin:** We will flock together and be one of the dangerous countries for you Americans.

**Aaron Little:** Oh Okay.

**Khun Than Lwin:** Because, if you won't help - they are digging a big cave. [talks to Victor for awhile] If you help us, you are helping yourself. Because otherwise, we've got ideas that this government is still acting like a North Korean style. They are still a dictator. In the end, if you don't help us, this country is ruled by dictators - you will get one of the most dangerous countries. One day, maybe no, who can predict what's going on.

**Victor**: By the way, I'm Christian, I believe that the day of judgment is drawing near. There are a lot of problem, a lot of diseases, you see. I pray to God. I won't cut off my hair unless we get a fair election - I'll keep staying it long.

**Aaron Little:** Oh, Okay! Well, Thank you so much for talking.

**Khun Than Lwin:** Okay, okay, welcome.

**Aaron Little:** And ask him to pass these out to his people. To get the people's opinion about American speeches and statements. I'll come back on July 9. Ask him if he wants more - I have more.

**Victor**: Yeah, yeah, we agree with the U.S. He read it already, he liked it - very good. He wants more!

**Aaron Little:** [unwrapping surveys] Okay I'll give him.

**Victor**: Oh we got to refill it at the back?

**Aaron Little:** No, No, No, you fill it out. It's a little check here [points to boxes] so if you agree. It's a survey.

**Victor**: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. So when you come back again you will come and collect.

**Aaron Little:** And then I will give your opinions, it will be in a book and I will give it to the American President - we'll see. This [the color brochure in front of the survey] is an information card. Just for information. It has my name, my department at the University, my contact information. But you fill this [survey] one out. And on July 9th.

**Victor**: The whole thing you gotta fill it out.

**Aaron Little:** Yeah, it takes a long time. It's also educational.

**Victor**: Oh yeah, you got to read nicely and you got to check it off. If you agree you check, if you disagree you can cancel it.

**Aaron Little:** Yeah, you just make a check by the box.

**Victor**: Oh yes, like an examination.

**Aaron Little:** Uh, Yes.

**Victor**: Like a test.

**Aaron Little**: A fun test.

**Victor**: In your country no need to learn like all the students in the world?

**Aaron Little**: No need to what?

**Victor**: For example one piece of Biography, no need to learn by heart - to sit to answer in the exam. You still have learn by heart?

**Aaron Little:** A little bit, not too much. History.

**Victor**: The dates and the years. In this country, if you are study physic or chemistry - the whole thing you have learn by heart and you have to sit. Its fifty percent memorization.

**Aaron Little:** Its fifty percent memorization and its fifty percent critical thinking. But high school is um, yeah high school is a waste of time [laughs]. No, high school is more memorization. Okay, so I will give him maybe 10, 20, 30 ... [counting out surveys]

**Victor**: Now we are at the moment I am teaching family album guesses.

**Aaron Little**: Oh! that's good! Okay, so just hand out to all the members, to anyone.

**Victor**: Only members?

**Aaron Little**: No it doesn't have to be members - anybody you know. And I come and collect them.
**Victor**: Can you give me ten sheets? I have 15 students and I would like to give it to them?

**Aaron Little**: Okay, [counts out] Here you are. And thank you for translating.

**Victor**: No, no just normal.

**Aaron Little**: I'll be back in ten days to collect it. What is your number actually.

**Victor**: Oh I don't have a phone - my son and daughter have one.

**Aaron Little**: Well maybe when you take the surveys and the students complete them give them to him [Khun Than Lwin]. Or how do I get them?

**Victor:** I will send to this place.

**Aaron Little:** That's easier.

## APPENDIX B

### Transcript of Interview With Dr. Tun Hlaing

Inle Lake, Shan State, Burma.06/29/2014

Author's Note: Dr. Tun Hlaing is Chairman of NLD Inle Lake

**Little**: Are you involved in the Pro-Democracy Movement?

**Hlaing**: Yeah.

**Little**: Oh good! That's good for Burma [rustling with papers]

**Hlaing**: Since before 88'.

**Little**: Oh since before 88!

**Hlaing**: Since 1966 when I came to University when students demonstrated, even at that time before 88 I participated in the Student movement.

**Little**: So, the first question I always ask is why? How did you get involved with pro-democracy movements?

**Hlaing**: Because of the military dictatorship we have no democracy as you know no freedom. Even the freedom of speech, freedom of expression, and even for our people no freedom for earning. As we know these as fundamental human rights, the declaration from the U.N.: regardless of Race, Sex, Color, regardless of religion as the very important one: regardless of the political belief. We all have equal fundamental human rights for freedom of everything. Among those freedom we value the freedom for earning, freedom to work, freedom for earning. At the time of the military dictatorship and socialism, Burmese Socialism, we were not even free to work for the earning. So, we realize that this political system is not good for the people. Not only for the progress, but even difficulty for normal dignity of the human. Human dignity, to maintain the human dignity and not only for the progress, but they don't recognize the human dignity. 'They' means military dictators.

**Little**: So as you got involved with the movement for democracy, every organization has to communicate with its members. Burma seems like it would be hard to create a movement! What kind of technology did you use?

**Hlaing**: Yeah, yeah. At the time student movements we just move by underground by disperse of leaflets. Underground distribution of leaflets against the military regime.

And we that's how we participate at the 1969 SouthEast Games. At the time of games, the students very precious and very valuable accommodation involving the Boxer Hall. And they had very ugly toilets, made by Bang Woo – those were in the compound of the University. Very ugly and we don't accept that. The students demonstrate against the map of the Judo and Boxing map out side the competition of foreign fighters. But we never been participating in that culture in the time of the students but at that time like many members I was taken into custody.

**Little**: So if you were at the time of the students of democratic reform, what kinds of technology would have liked to have had to help your organizations? What kinds of thing did you need?

**Hlaing**: At time of my medical student life, any involvement in political movements we just have small movements and it contains ten to five members. The communication was contained to one person to one person to one person. To whom know each other and to those are the members of the group. It means that oppressions of the military regime were very fierce. And so to discover underground student movement and we had to hide deep underground, but we try our best to distribute underground leaflets.

**Little**: And what were the people doing. Did the people support?

**Hlaing**: At the time of the movement, only a few people could support and give substantive support and participate in the demonstrations. People who were in student movement. Student leaders gave speeches to lots of students in the University compound in front of the Student Union Building – people who were being crushed by the military regime in '62 in 7 July. In * July morning in front of that building, the building was demolished by mines and demolition. And in front of that ground the student leaders gave a speech on the ruins. Because we had been separated from the people we must to show the hypocrisy, And some of the people participate in order to call the people to participate in the student movements. And then the people participate and then the students combine in front of the civil service. And then students were asked to move by guns drawn and gun burst so that we had to decide whether we be arrested by blocking from two sides or to go for the participation of the people. So the students decided to call for the mass participation of the people. We go through from the cemetery and went through the town and so many people participate in the demonstration. And then they blocked and arrested some fifty students. And by strength they crush the demonstrations. They dispersed the people.

**Little**: Did you get support from people outside of the movement, outside of Burma, like Norway, U.S.?

**Hlaing**: No support at the time of the student movement. No support apart from the moral one, BBC worldwide service, Western countries like Norway were later. No

monetary or substantive support apart from the moral one from the broadcasting service. Only after '88 I think we get support, but we don't get support from anyone.

**Little**: America became interested in the Pro-Democracy movement around 1990.

**Hlaing**: Eh since '88.

**Little**: Yeah, since '88. But especially with Bill Clinton. How aware were you, did hear the speeches by Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and President Barack Obama?

**Hlaing**: I listened to BBC and RFA and later TV program.

**Little**: Did you think that support was doing something?

**Hlaing**: Yeah doing something but not so effective just moral support. As you know the U.S. gave support but gave nothing.

**Little**: Well, I wondering what would you have wanted them to have done?

**Hlaing**: At the time of '88 crisis the people were being very much oppressed by the military rule and the normal lifestyles getting poorer and poorer. People no longer stand for their poverty. Even for a bag rice. Suppose a bag of rice is carried to Thangyi and on the way, they take it down and confiscate so when it gets here, even a bag of rice for everyday food is on the black market during the time of military regime. So to get rice, and for the one who want to buy and who want to sell must do so on the black market. Very notorious! [laughs]. And as you know each and every people, anyone who go and spend his nights apart from his house must take permission from the regional [laughs] and has to give money? Very notorious! And that's a violation of the fundamental human rights at the climax [laughs]. The people who are above reward, and at the time there is 43 or 47 people who come to Thangyi from [General] Ne Win. The people were very much in poor condition and they are ready to revolt against the military because they were poor. And so most of the people follow that Gun on Thangyi train [unsure of what he's saying here]. And later on in eight of August '88, there was a paper being distributed by Min Kun Nyi, he's the number one, the top student leader. He distributed only page, straightforward to overthrow the communist regime. And then so they had student strikes. And so many came from the big cities, the capital of the states, slowly, slowly move up through the smaller levels. And Min Kun Nyi article more effective than guns. We suspect that Min Kun Nyi's article was being support by U.S. embassy I think so. Because the paper is very good. And as I read in one article that is being support by the U.S. embassy and then in the time of military regime they try to get shelter, for asylum, at the embassy.

**Little**: The embassy tried to give asylum to Min Kun Nyi?

**Hlaing**: Yeah, yeah.

**Little**: And were they able to?

**Hlaing**: No. He go out inside the public and give speech to the people. At the time of '88 and we participate in this region. We left of our studying place and go out to give speech in many places including Nwangshwe. So many people gathered in the playground.

**Little**: President Thein Sein is now doing some reform in your country. What is your opinion of those reforms?

**Hlaing**: At the time of the beginning of President Thein Sein, and it seems very good negotiations with the democratic institution. And slowly right now, he's become militant again.

**Little**: Oh he is? So why do you think he's becoming more militant? What things are happening?

**Hlaing**: As you know, he himself is prime minister of the military regime. And he is the most responsible person to draw 2008 constitution. 2008 Constitution as you know is not for the implementing democracy, but the provocation of the military regime. All the power is being given to the commander and chief of the army. The administrative power, the legislative power, the juristic power. Everything being disseminated from the chief commander of the army. And the chief commander Thein Sein is the main person who authorize and he's never been elected but appointed by someone. He is commander and chief. His appointment is lifelong up until he retires. They usually extend the retire age so they can stay a long time.

**Little**: So can America, the President of United States do to push President Thein Sein and Myanmar to reform for democracy.

**Hlaing**: From 19 August we often met with personnel of the U.S. embassy. And at that time Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and we discuss thoroughly the political situation of our country.

**Little**: So what should they do? What should we do?

**Hlaing**: The final consideration, the military regime has fixed a very credible and critical political crisis – a time of coup. We want to recognize it apart from the neighboring country, China [laughs]. There is a political crisis, an economic crisis, there's no foreign exchange and there is only relief by black money of Kun SA – the drug lord. His money from Bangkok inserted to Rangoon. More then 600 million dollars

shifted from Bangkok to Rangoon. It's been written in a report by the U.N. at the time. Political crisis, economic crisis, diplomatic crisis. No one is given religion to military regime during this crisis. People do not support that. Burmese people demonstrated and they [military] took and killed thousands of people. To stronghold their power and to restore law and order. You might not recognize that. That's the King Cobra joint military practice at the Burma and Thai. And King Cobra military crisis being carried out by joint Thai and U.S. Army. And from that joint crisis they have struck some drug lords headquarters in Eastern Burma, Shan State. Forty seven missile blown up the Drug Lords camps and it's the military regime very much excited west-led. It means that the military regime only understand what the gun say.

**Little**: When was this?

**Hlaing**: 1990 and after the '88 crisis. King Cobra. It means that the military regime only understand the gun – it's the only way to draw them to the table for dialogue. At the time, please get military pressure to the regime otherwise they won't understand, they won't obey. At the time of '88 crisis we know that seventh fleet entered the Burmese Sea Border but at the time our leaders did not agree that U.S. intervention at that time. U Nu, U Tin Oo, and U du Wei, and Aung San Suu Kyi do not agree with U.S. intervention at that time, but the protestors progressive people leaders, second line leader do agree that and call the fleet into the Burmese Sea border. The first line leader do not agree with U.S. limitary intervention. And there was a military regime coup who then killed so many people. And if the U.S. armed forces backed the people they do not killed as many people. My opinion.

**Little**: So what is your opinion of Barack Obama?

**Hlaing**: He helped our democratic institution quite a lot. And his word is very effective. Even the leaders, the generals of the Army know that U.S. is the strongest – they can arrest them as if its in the middle of the day.

**Little**: So what would you like President Obama to do in helping the 2015 elections? What should Barack Obama be doing to help?

**Hlaing**: The only one we want to urge to U.S. government is, to witness the free and fair election of 2015. But its not fair to support to us substantively with monetary support, its not fair to consider who is pro-democratic parties. But if I were a first line leader, I can promise something if we win the election by ten percent. But even the U.S. may not trust ten percent. My criticism for our first line leaders, sometime first line leaders sometime working for a utopian ideal. They don't want to be influenced by *any* country, but it is not working. We should choose the most suitable country to support us strongly up to the final goal. And to the last strength to withdraw the military leader.

**Little**: My last elections is: you have the elections coming in 2015, you've got a little reform, what do you think led to the success that you have. What do you think happened to force the government to reform.

**Hlaing**: I am chairman of NLD in this region. We are trying to signature campaign for amendments to 436. Not to be easy amendment of the constitution. And right now the amendment of the constitution should be supported by many so-called democratic parties and many democratic armed forces should be support. And some of the monks and even them. And the amendment of the constitution it is for the reform. But actually the 2008 constitution should be totally abolished and redraw a new one. As you know the draft had been drawn by the military regime and for the purposes of military rule. For the time being, it seems to be working well. But for the long run, for the whole country, for the whole people we do the amendments not for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, not for our leader, not for our party only, for the whole country including the military forces. In the long run, with the 2008 constitution the commander in chief status is not secure. Without the crony with him, no one can get up. When there is a greedy junior officer, who is close to him, in one day he may try to assassinate him, so the commander-in-chief is not secure under 2008 constitution.

**Little**: Even for the military, the 2008 constitution should be abolished!

**Hlaing**: Yeah, even for the military. And for the commander-in-chief is not secure. It's bad for everyone! And in the constitutional amendment the highest power should be under control of the elected persons like in your country. It will conversely change to eight years – no one is allowed to stay in office longer. That is a very good idea!

**Little**: Except for Vladimir Putin [laughs] It's his second eight years.

**Hlaing**: [laughs] And ruling the country by justice and making the law by justice by elected one and by judicial power by elected persons. Only then it's good in the long run of the country. We do want to urge the U.S. to give strong support. And if necessary, not fighting our country, but threatening from the border. [laughs]. Otherwise they will go back to their barracks. Military ambition very important.

**Little**: So my last question is, what words do you have for the American people. What would like to say to the American people?

**Hlaing**: Thank you very much for supporting the democratic institution since the time of independence of our country and the time of '88, and the support to our democracy institution. After the coup no one even gave their verbal support apart from the Americans. We have some American friends, Marshall – who was the leader of American ING, a global community firm. Tom Freston, who gave an award to the Lady.

I think he is the Secretary or Chairman of the American-Southeast Asia Association. He's been here two times! He has donated some money to build this hospital!

**Little**: Speaking of money, right now there's many American NGOs, USAID, and the American government who want to give money. Where should we put our money in Burma so that it doesn't go into the pockets of the cronies?

**Hlaing**: Most of the NGOs go through the proper channel so that the government takes a cut, they take away and put it in their pocket. Not only that, you can pay some person, for using the money at the time and place, and the implementing company should be somehow related to the democratic institutions. Otherwise, it goes to the military regime, as if you are supporting the military regime. And some small community work, and implementing by Marshall a global community. They build schools and small houses and hospital. They give drugs, napkins, directly to the public schools here.

**Little**: So give directly at the grassroots level?

**Hlaing**: Yes, very good! Right it's possible, previously it was not possible – even when one foreign visitor wanted to visit me, I had to answer so many questions. I was being observed by five parties: one, military intelligence, special branch of police, police Thanzaw, USDP, and the regional. They have to give a report at the high level whenever there is a particular event here. For example when there is a foreign visitor here. One the persons from President Clinton visited here and there were so many video cameras here – I have to answer their person [military] first but the words were twisted. And why she came here, what is the matter that she come here, and she said that there were concerns of American embassy like malaria, TB, HIV – that's it!

**Little**: And now its okay.

**Hlaing**: Eh, a little bit at ease. Three or four days ago, visiting from Belgium and round about twenty physicians, pediatricians, and students and no body interfered. Last year, the regional military intelligence interfered. This year its better.

**Little**: Well hopefully, in 2015 Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

**Hlaing**: If 2015 elections she'll win. I thought to myself the main thing is to win the 2015 election. If we win, it will be like the 1990 election again. I think it will be like the 1990 election, I was elected Parliamentary member. We gathered in Gandhi Hall and at the time, the U.S., U.K., and E.U. gave their opinion do not declare this federal government. Not to delay to election to government by NLD – unilateral declaration. And some party who wins the elections, attend that assembly, the U.K., the U.S. will recognize, but no one came. Only NLD came, we are not recognized by foreign. If 2015 election, if we win again please recognize! [laughs] And please give the necessary

support but prepare for the worst – we may need some military support. Not to invade our country but to threaten from the border. Hand over the power to the elected person otherwise you'll be dead! [laughs]

**Little**: Well thank you so much for giving your time. These are the surveys [hands him surveys]. These are my surveys, I spoke with Kin Zaw Oo. These are about ninety surveys to hand out to your members. I want as people to take them and give their opinion about democracy, policy. And its going to published in a book and read by the president of the united states.

**Hlaing**: You are going to submit this?

**Little**: Oh yes, to Hillary Clinton.

**Hlaing**: If we win again in 2015 election. Please support us!

**Little**: I will.

**Hlaing**: Up to the final vote.

**Little**: Which is changing the constitution?

**Hlaing**: Whether the constitution is changed or not that's not the matter I think to myself, they won't change. But under this constitution the election should be free and fair. Please give witness throughout the region whether it is free and fair. We are confident that if the election is free and fair we'll surely win. And when we win please support us! The final goal of democracy. And if its like the 1990 election, and they won't handover, please give strong support to us.

**Little**: I will, I will.

**Hlaing**: That may mean military threat. And at the time of the King Cobra projects, we have met one of the guy Colin Powell – at the time who was in Afghanistan who was bombing Afghanistan. I asked if it was possible to bomb some part of the military regime? [laughs] 'oh no!' [laughs]

**Little**: Yeah he would say no. Well let's see, hope for best and prepare for the worst.

**Hlaing**: Should this [survey] be distributed in this region? Thangyi, Nyaung Shwe?

**Little**: Shan State. I will come in ten days to collect them. It's not a huge amount of time. These are I think ninety surveys.

**Hlaing**: Ten Days?

**Little**: Its not a lot of time, but I don't have a lot of time. I go to Mandalay and then I come back here on my way back to Yangon. I did talk to U Tin Oo the day before yesterday at NLD headquarters. He's more, diplomatic. Some of what he said I agreed, he wouldn't say. What happens if 2015 doesn't work. It's a problem.

**Hlaing**: The only one thing should be the election should be free and fair. The military is so cunning with lies and prize. And they try to lie to the people to win. We are confident that 80% free and fair we can win. We are afraid that the world will not recognize it and there will never be a transfer of power. That's a big problem. Please give strong support including military threatening. U Tin Oo includes those who were reluctant to accept U.S. military intervention, who were near to the coast of our country.

**Little**: What might is these surveys, the opinion of the people. A lot of president say, this is what is good for Burma but no one actually comes out and asks what do you Burmese think?

**Hlaing**: You will recollect these articles?

**Little**: Yes, in ten days. On July 9th. It's also educational! It shows what has been said by American President for the last two decades, the last twenty years, what George Bush, Bill Clinton, Barack Obama have saying. So a lot of people are reading these statements for the first time. They could also learn while giving their opinion.

**Hlaing**: For this region?

**Little**: I go tomorrow to Thangyi to this?

**Hlaing**: Shan Association?

**Little**: Kyaw Thu told me to talk to him.

**Hlaing**: And so we have the Thangyi NLD leaders? Would you like to see him. I'll get in touch with him and give you his number. [walks away to find number]. Shan Tea? With peanut and honey?

**Little**: Oh yes, its very good!

## APPENDIX C

### Transcript of Interview With Kyaw Thu

6/23/2014 in Yangon, Myanmar

Kyaw Thu is a famous actor and founder of a free funeral service and health clinic.

(Translated by Dr. Mimi Oo)

**Kyaw Thu:** I was involved with the movement because I couldn't tolerate the oppressive government. People broke human rights – the public's as well my family's as well as my right were rights were violated – that's why.

Since 1962 Ne Win came to power my family's possessions were nationalized and threw the people in jail including my dad. Since then it was carrying this [burden] in my mind until now. He was involved in the September revolution in 2007.

In the 1988 revolution I was involved as an artistic point of view. When I was students I was oppressed as well and as students we were tested many times. The education was tested – I don't like this kind of treatment. Since Ne Win, Saw Maung, Thanshwe, they all are going along in the same pattern.

The constitution that pertains to the civil society has been the same since 1962. In this era it's somewhat similar too. [even though theirs is progress in civil society these days, but it's still the same – it did not actually change] I'm not a political person, I am just trying to help the people – I'm not trying to make a political organization.

**Aaron Little:** What does he think about the pro-democracy movements in Burma right now like the National league for democracy, like the Shan. What do you think about the progress that has been made those organizations?

**Kyaw Thu:** If you see from the outside world that they will think that there is progress on the surface. The government I doing some things that could be looked upon as progress but the suffering of the people is the same as 1962 if not a little worse.

They [government] are putting out headlines for peace foundation, they build national projects – but these are all headlines but if really look at it's the same old people. It's just for them to look like progress but actually they're lining their pockets.

**Aaron Little:** What kind of communication technology would be important to use for pro-democracy to inform the people, connect the people, to organize?

**Kyaw Thu:** The technology is secondary, the mindset is most important. The people, government, everybody's mindset needs to be changed – every single one's mindset needs to be changed. You've been molded into this mindset that the foldings have left their marks after crossing many eras – before you can do anything these bad behaviors need to be taken away. [even if you say something its not going to be effective until you take these bad behaviors away]

**Aaron Little:** So how do you change the mindset?

**Kyaw Thu:** There are many religions in Burma and many ethnicities. For Buddhists there are monks, for Christians there are Fathers, for Muslims there are leaders – the leaders need to guide the people along the right way. People should avoid extremism. Across religions and cultures people have learn have help each other, be kind to one another – whichever religion you're from. Whoever is in need you must help each other an have empathy. You have to have empathy. You have to have kindness. That person is black, that person in Indian, you cannot separate him simply because he was black or because he is Indian. Before you get peace you need work together.

**Aaron Little:** So what you're saying is that peace comes from the religious leaders?

**Kyaw Thu:** They need to change themselves – the religious.

There is a Buddist God, a Christian God, Muslim God, Hindu God, all Gods teach you to do the right things, but people take there religion to an extreme and do certain things to an extreme – it separated the groups. We all need to check our prides and lower our ego. The religious leaders should not have egos involved in the religion.

**Aaron Little:** During 1988 how aware were you of U.S. interests in your democratic movements – were you aware of people outside of your country pressuring the junta?

**Kyaw Thu:** 1988 involved everyone, the military, the people, it got the attention of everyone. We got the attention because the government was very focused on gaining their people without thinking of the people. Many people died but the government was oblivious to the needs of the people. There was this huge Cyclone Nargis but the government was more concerned in retaining their power. The government's misbehavior was seen in this. The government misbehavior came out and was given attention to the revolution because the government even imprisoned its own monks. In Nargis and the 2007 revolution the government was inhuman – even they could do it to their own kin. They're inhumane. They neglect all of the people.

**Aaron Little:** So the president of the United States, the British Leader, there were a lot

of leaders who spoke out against the Burmese government. Were you aware what was happening outside of Burma – what other countries were saying about Burma?

**Kyaw Thu:** We heard about it – we heard that there were large ships docked outside of Burma – we heard about those. The government said you need to be mindful of your own business, you should let outside countries interfere. Only now are they allowing external but also that's to line their own pockets. We heard about the American Navy coming to our country.

**Aaron Little:** Did he hear about the speeches the American president made about the speeches?

**Kyaw Thu:** in 2007 I was trying to flee so I didn't hear about that. When Obama came to the University of Yangon he had a chance to attend that speech.

**Aaron Little:** So he never heard a speech by George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, or George H. W. Bush?

**Kyaw Thu:** Never.

**Aaron Little:** What is your opinion of President Barack Obama and the changes that have happened under President Obama's pressure and assistance. So Obama has released all of the sanction they started sending money, USAID, he's working with Aung San Suu Kyi. What does he think of what Obama has done for Burma?

**Kyaw Thu:** I came to America and was invited to meet with the Senate. I was not happy about the sanctions being released. Because if you release the sanction the cronies get richer. Aung San Suu Kyi requested to release the sanction, but its up it's up to you. But there has to be some conditions attached to release of the sanctions. For example, that half of the sanctions should be released and then we should see what the Burmese government does.

**Aaron Little:** What do you think the United States should do?

**Kyaw Thu:** Other countries come to visit and look at how Burma is doing, and then they go to parliament. They come to us last – even when they're on the way to the airport., we know what is going on with the people – they should try to connect with us. [if you really want to know what is going with the people – you should come talk to the people.] education, health, people should go to the organizations and foundations first and then they should go the Parliament last. The true story of people's lives, feelings, and the true stories – they are here.

**Aaron Little:** Are there certain things, certain organizations – what kind of help can America give in way that doesn't help the cronies helps the people?

**Kyaw Thu:** We have many organizations here in Burma – for example there are organization in Shan. We need training in the country. For example health – even first aid training. Money is not the most important factor – we collect money from the people but we are still lacking expertise. If you could send experts to teach and provide training and technology. Money would destroy people – if you provide money alone it will disperse the people.

When John McCain came he asked the question 'where are you are getting aid from other countries' I said no. So John McCain asked 'how are you [the organization] surviving?" The people are donating. McCain asked 'are you afraid that the donation will decrease?' So my wife said "only two ways that the donations will go down one is economic calamity and the other thing is that if we use the money for our own personal use – if we become corrupt then the donations will stop. If we are truthful, if our work comes from our hearts the flow of donations shouldn't stop.

**Aaron Little:** Has the United States donated money to this organization?

**Kyaw Thu:** USAID came one time and were trying to transferring money into his bank but Kyaw Thu refused. No, we want to be independent – only Burmese money.

I need people with expertise, and technology and equipment – essential medical devices, hospital equipment and medicines for example – this is what I'll accept.

**Aaron Little:** The elections are coming up in 2015 – what kinds of things can the U.S. government do to ensure that they're free and fair elections?

**Kyaw Thu:** The things is that it needs to be fair and square. The Constitution needs to be strong. We need a Constitution that is standing on the side of the people. The law is strange, If you take 300K its corruption. The leaders – the government, they do whatever they want so if America, England or who ever come in they will be discourage. They need to change themselves. There's no transparency.

**Aaron Little:** There have been big changes – what do you think led to those changes. Aung San Suu Kyi was released. She was elected to parliament along with 47 members of the NLD. What led to that success? I'd like to know what made the present changes possible? How did it happen?

**Kyaw Thu:** NLD came in but NLD has no actual power. They couldn't do anything. So now they have rely on the people again. Everybody is trying to abolish 436 [a law in the constitution] – even Daw Suu do everything on her own. Daw Suu has many who are

fighting against her. People who love Daw Suu and people who really democracy have to get together and with the pressure from the outside only then it might be better. It's not going to be all smooth. Thandu thukha (god's sons) monks were stripped of their monkhood and were thrown into jail – if they are that heartless to do that to people who are doing god's works, they can do anything to anyone else. They won't care. Now they let them wear their robes again, so if they are that heartless they won't care. Whoever comes they'll drive them away – they don't provide entry to the country. There's no media freedom, the whole country has no freedom, they do whatever they want.

Is there an international court, is there a judge, for example ASEAN, belonging to certain groups of countries, if the judge can point out that this law is unconstitutional – then only they'd be able to stop this law. This is an incorrect law.

## APPENDIX D

### Transcript of Interview With Jimmy Ko

July 7th, 2014, Yangon, Burma

Author's note: Jimmy Ko is Secretary of the Public Relations Department of The 88 Generation

**Aaron Little**: I'm conducting this study because I want to know what the Burmese people themselves want, the American say "we think the Burmese people want this, that," and actually no one asks just the Burmese people. He talks to President Thein Sein, he talks to Aung San Suu Kyi - I love Aung San Suu Kyi, but she's an elite. So I've given out around a thousand surveys in a month which is a lot of work.

**Jimmy Ko**: This is a big job!

**Aaron Little**: Big job. Oh I think this is mine [received a mixed juice at the café in which interview was conducted]. Papaya. Then I'm also interviewing the leaders of the National League for Democracy, the SNDP - the Shan state, and I went to Mandalay the day the Muslims and the Buddhists [ere fighting each other] that day, it was very difficult - I couldn't actually talk to a lot of people. But here we are!

**Jimmy Ko**: Okay. So we'll talk an hour.

**Aaron Little**: Yeah no more than that - usually forty-five minutes.

**Jimmy Ko**: Okay, thank you - I have another appointment. I couldn't have a holiday because always telephone and for the time being I'm in Malaysia, and Malaysians are killing - some Burmese people were killed by some people.

**Aaron Little**: What?

**Jimmy Ko**: Yes, yes, a constituted killing in Malaysia. So I flew out in the morning - they call me and they ask, "what's been happening in Malaysia?" After I transfer the information to the presidential office and the reporters, so I went to contact the Malaysian ambassadors.

**Aaron Little**: Why were they killed?

**Jimmy Ko**: It is some kind of terrorist movement.

**Aaron Little**: Malaysian Terrorist movement?

**Jimmy Ko**: Malaysian terrorist movement. Because it's a kind of revenge for the Mandalay killings, Mandalay problems. Because in the very recent months, I think two thousand body last year. Last year we had just experienced it last year. When bomber, so and some of our Burmese people killed by the other Islamists with the Bomber. It's a tribal revenge because of the situation last year.

**Aaron Little**: So it just goes round and round.

**Jimmy Ko**: But last year the Malaysian government totally control every situation, but Min Ko Naing and I went to Malaysia and met with Malaysian officials to defend our Burmese peoples.

**Aaron Little**: I would not have made that link from Mandalay to Malaysia.

**Jimmy Ko**: Yes!

**Aaron Little**: So the first question I ask every leader, every person in the democracy movement is: you sacrificed a lot for your political beliefs, you went to prison for a long time, many times actually. What made you become involved in the pro-democracy movement?

**Jimmy Ko**: It is my instincts: I want freedom. I had heavy pressure, so I was drawn into democracy under the administration of BSPP (Burma Socialist Programme Party) - the party of Ne Win. But actually, I really didn't know about democracy at that time because the government never allow to know our own rights, about human rights, about democracy - they never allow to know everybody. Everything was socialist democracy. We grew up in a social democracy, but it's not a real social democracy. It is called a military democracy. My father had a very important role in my political life - my father was a student in 1962 - a very bad time. At the time my father was one of the witness of the 7 July/8 July weekend. So he saw the demolish of the student union, student unions, so the government blown up with dynamite the student union at Rangoon University. At that time, my father was a student of Rangoon University. So I had opportunities to read the books collected by my father for many years. Because at the time, we lived in the very, very small town in the Shan state and I was born in Thangyi and my sister came from Inle Lake. So, I live in Pindaya for ten years. Pindaya is well known all over the world because of the tourism site [namely the Pindaya Caves] We have no entertainment at the time, read the books and listen to the radio. So I begin to listen to the radio like BBC and read the newspaper. I read the books collected by my father. The books including the biographies of the great leaders of Abraham Lincoln, Kissinger, Mao, Washington, including the Kim Il Sun.

**Aaron Little**: Kim Il Sun [laughs].

**Jimmy Ko**: [laughs] Yes, Kim Il Sun the leader of North Korea. And then I began to read the novels, especially the Chinese martial arts novels. So I like the Chinese Martial Arts novels very much. And after ten years living in Pindaya we move to Rangoon and I had an opportunity to study in the most premier schools in Burma called St. Augustine - one of the most famous schools. Everything had been changed in my eyes. In life everything, you can worry. In the most famous schools in Rangoon it was the highest class, I could consider these classes, these standards - why? This was my question to my parents - the rich person, the poor person - all different between. So I was reading the books again and again especially when I was High School student, I read a lot of novel translated by the famous writers like "The Carpetbaggers" written by Harold Robbins. In our country a lot of books were left-leaning books in our country. At the time it was a communist movement was a very famous movement in our country. So you see a lot of books about communists and a lot restaurant of china. Even the American writers were very famous in our country like John Steinbeck. A lot of students and intellectuals liked John Steinbeck. I really liked the Carpetbaggers and Steel Toe by Harold Robbins and another one was The Adventurers. So my thoughts began to change at the time. I studied about the planning economy - I couldn't understand what is market economy. I never understood about the market economy because we are grown up under the planning economies, so within the books I began to understand about the freedom, about democracy in these countries. I love poems, so I wrote a lot of poems. I really didn't really know about politics at the time, but I began to study the history of students, of Burmese students, since the independence movement and I didn't understand the student movements after the coup of the military since 1962. So military general shot a lot of students in 1962 and shot laborers in 1976 and killed students in 1974, 1975 - a lot of people were killed by the general. Now I began to understand that the military government was brutal. So grew to hate BSPP. You know a lot of my friends, from my high school, were sons and brothers of high ranking ministers in my school. In my school. I gradually knew about the authorities and in 1988 - at the time I was an ordinary student. I went to the University happy and jolly like other students. I wanted to be drinking alcohol, so happy and dancing and going to class - this was my life. My life as a student. And sometimes I was hiding the ladies. Suddenly, on the tenth of March in 1988, the military general killed our student again. It was a repeat of our history again. Once I heard about this - now I saw about this. This challenged the history, so I decided to [become] involve in politics and fight against the BSPP. Even though I couldn't understand what is democracy much, I decided to research to topple the BSPP, including General Ne Win. And the very day on the 16th of March 1988 - the students from the Rangoon of Technology were killed on 16th of March so our Rangoon University was a famous university. I studied Physics. We motivated our students to fight against the BSPP we call for the student to come together on the streets and we demanded the government to apologize for shooting the student to death, but the hands of the government were accustomed to violence. So, no question, no answer but violence. At that time they didn't use the bullet but they used the club, and club. Before my eyes I saw the brutality of in person. Since then, I've been involved in politics today.

**Aaron Little**: So you got involved in politics and you ended up going to prison, when you got out of prison why didn't you stop? Why didn't you say enough - I stop, no more politics for me, right?

**Jimmy Ko**: Yeah.

**Aaron Little**: Many people would say 'no more.'

**Jimmy Ko**: Yeah. In general, because of my conscience, but the most important thing was that while I was in prison for many years, I studied a lot of things about myself. I asked a lot of questions about myself: 'who am I?" 'Why are there humans in world?" These are very important questions. So I studying teachings of Buddha again and again and I began to really understand what is a human being. We have to do three things as a human being, three processes. Three categories of a human being: 1st, do good for yourself. 2nd category is higher than 1st category: do good for your society. 3rd category is highest, do good for your universe. Loca - it's the highest space. So, its for human beings to live and do good in the world. Without these categories, we're not human beings. In order to do good for yourself, you must do good back. If you wish to do good then for yourself, you must support your society and your Loca. Next then, you do good for your society you must have some kind of sacrifice. It's a good sacrifice. So I asked myself, do good for myself. So while I was in prison, I tried to be good guy. I study a lot of subject as I can at the time. But still the authorities never allow to have small pieces of paper in my hands. They never allow read and write for many years. If authority caught a piece of paper in my hands, I will be punished severely in solitary confinement, shackles with cross bars for months.

**Aaron Little**: For months!

**Jimmy Ko**: Yeah, for months. And beaten many times. You know because I love words, I love books, so I tried to find other ways to have books everybody can bring to me through smugglers. Smugglers. I was smuggling a lot of books in prison, even a radio. Military intelligence control every cell, every angle - even though they control every angle, they couldn't control corruption. So I tried to corrupt the servicemen and the staff.

**Aaron Little**: That's smart.

**Jimmy Ko**: There's a saying, there's a saying of prisons 'you will never know when the Elephant has entered the main doors of the prison.'

**Aaron Little**: You will never know when the elephant has entered the main doors of the prisons?

**Jimmy Ko**: Yes, will never know when the elephant enters.

**Aaron Little**: The main doors of the prisons.

**Jimmy Ko**: The main doors of the prisons.

**Aaron Little**: What does that mean?

**Jimmy Ko**: 'You'll know when the goats enter in the backdoors of prison.'

**Aaron Little**: You know when the goats...

**Jimmy Ko**: Yeah, the meaning is: if you want to smuggle something, you must smuggle the big thing and the heavy things so for the prison guards not to know. If you are smuggling small things you will be caught.

**Aaron Little**: Oh my god, that's brilliant! So you listen to a lot of radio, you have heard the speeches of Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and I guess now recently Barack Obama. How were those speeches important to you? How was America?

**Jimmy Ko**: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Americans are very important to us because it's the leading democracy country, the leading of the world, and the main supporter of our democracy movement. So, very important to us. Today, Americans are very close with us. especially the American Embassy are our close friends. Especially every ambassador of America. Now Derek Mitchell is very good, a friend. We accept that Americans sometimes saying [inaudible] so we'll involve with their interests - some of us are saying that. I accept that because our countries what is their interest? Because Democracy is their interest, so I accept. But you know, most of the people who are saying about that are leftist guys; leftist guys so leftist are sitting in Burma. They are always saying that Americans are just fascists. So I'm never denying but I reply that democracy is in the interest of America and they no reply me. [laugh]

**Aaron Little**: [laughing] Every movement, every organization must have some way to communicate with the members of a group - what kind of technology, I mean technology very broadly - a book is a technology in a way, what kind of communication technologies did you use to speak to other members?

**Jimmy Ko**: In prison?

**Aaron Little**: Well in prison, outside of prison - to send your message. To rally.

**Jimmy Ko**: Our generation is just like an open fighter. In 1988 we were underground movement, underground activists - you know, underground student. After the BSPP crushed down the student uprising, I was executive member of the Democratic Party for a New Society DPNS. I was co-founder of DPNS. Not too long I was arrested in 1989 and I live in prison for 16 years.

**Aaron Little**: 16 years!

**Jimmy Ko**: Yes, for the first time.

**Aaron Little**: Oh my God!

**Jimmy Ko**: 1989 until 2005.

**Aaron Little**: 1989 to 2005. My God!

**Jimmy Ko**: So after my release for the first time in 2005, we gathered again. The student leader of 1988 movements, gathered again and we organize a new generation of students.

**Aaron Little**: But how can you organize?

**Jimmy Ko**: Oh, in person! Min Ko Naing is an important leader. Min Ko Naing you know.

**Aaron Little**: Oh yes, Min Ko Naing,

**Jimmy Ko**: So Min Ko Naing is my friend since 1988. He was also in prison from 1989 to 2005. [laughs] just like me! A lot of student leaders were released and organized again established a new student group and continued to fight and challenge the government. Openly.

**Aaron Little**: Openly?

**Jimmy Ko**: Yes, Openly! Openly. We challenge the government. Anytime they could arrest me. So are ready to be arrested again.

**Aaron Little**: That is very brave.

**Jimmy Ko**: As soon as I was at my house on 6 July 2005, I call the officer of special branch to my house and one of the officers of special branch came to me and met me. So explain [to] him: I continue to do all of this again, you could arrest me everything

and then what? Under the comments of your hierarchy authorities, because I understand their mechanism, but I warn you, I says, you never involve my social activities, except my political. My friends and my relatives will visit to me - you don't ask any questions to them. You can ask me directly. If I heard the news that you threaten my friends or my relatives, I challenge you - because I knew everything about them. They couldn't stand above their salary, on their salary they couldn't stand. A lot of corruption and I know they have a motorcycle to watch us, to go around by motorcycle. Everyday three motorcycles would cost 2 gallons or 3 gallons of the gasoline. How can they get the money for the gasoline? Government never pay, but they try to get the money from the smuggler, why smuggler? Black market I knew every black market in town and official gambling center all over the place. Just like a lottery, you know. 3 digit lottery in our country. Most of the people draw the three digits lottery. So there is a lot of three digit lottery gamblers and so the dealers of three digit lottery, so they [special branch police] ask for money from them. These special branch are very poor. He couldn't stand on their money so find money from the smugglers and these lotteries. So I said to him again, I knew everything about what is happening in my town, but I never report to your higher ranking authorities and officers without acknowledging you. You should stop smuggling or you will transport to another place. Your families will be broken. Of course to move to another place will take for three months at least, and over 300,000 kyats at least. So I never wanted to be like this. So there is some negotiation. So they agree with me. You should be a gentleman special branch and act intelligently because we are open fighters, except not my relatives and not my friends. They agree with us, so we move. We have a lot of movements openly. In 2007 I was arrested again.

**Aaron Little**: Oh you were arrested again, two years free!

**Jimmy Ko**: Yes. So I marry my college sweetheart. She was in prison for nearly thirteen years and before I was arrested again we had a baby who was four months. We, Min Ko Naing and I were arrested in 2007.

**Aaron Little**: Both of you?

**Jimmy Ko**: Thirteen of us. All of the leaders of the '88 generation groups. So the next day my wife made many phone calls and she called people to fight against the government after we were arrested. At the time my baby was four months old, my wife gave our baby to her parent and she started a movements. It was the very beginning of the Saffron revolution.

**Aaron Little**: The Americans have been interested in Burmese pro-democracy movements for a long time, did you try to contact the Americans. I guess you were free for two years, was there any conversation between you and the American government.

**Jimmy Ko**: Exactly! A lot of conversation! At the time of '88 there was no ambassador - only a chargé d'affaires, the Americans I think government recognized the military Junta so they had no diplomatic relations except for the chargé d'affaires. The chargé d'affaires was the highest government in Burma. So we had a good relationship with the chargé d'affaires. The American government supported us and the American Center supported us. The American Center USIS then we sent so many student to American Center to teach English and the American sent out allotments of students. Americans Center allowed us to have meeting and seminar for the movements. The American Center allowed, no problems. We were in time and class so no problem because American center really knew about us, our movement. So they morally and educationally supported us and we were very close and kept in touch with the American Embassy to draw the diplomatic communities and the diplomatic strategy for Burma. So the American Ambassador, now and since 2005 until nowadays with the ambassador and the chargé d'affaires have h regular meetings.

**Aaron Little**: Regular meetings at the embassy?

**Jimmy Ko**: American Embassy always ask us our opinion on the current situation. Before the American government impose strategies, they always ask our advice. The American embassies always ask about our situation and ask [for] our advice about the American policy in Burma.

**Aaron Little**: So I know you have to go, it's almost an hour. I have two questions: President Thein Sein has had some reforms. It looks like, at least in American, like things have opened up. He released political prisoners. Aung San Suu Kyi is in Parliament. What do you think about these reforms? I've heard a lot of leaders that have a wide variety of opinions about these reforms. What do think about these reforms and what do you think about the 2015 elections?

**Jimmy Ko**: We will accept that we have more freedom than ever. Freedom of association, freedom of press, and freedom of assembly and movement. But we have to do a lot of things for the democracy. Today we call this a period of liberalization. After the period of liberalization, we have to go to democratization and the transitional period. The transitional period is very important to institutionalize our country for democracy.

**Aaron Little**: To institutionalize democracy?

**Jimmy Ko**: Sure. A corrupt institution won't be here for long. So we need progress which must be complete. Little by little, Big or little - it doesn't matter about the progress, it is my opinion. But every progress must be complete. so now we are in the democratization process. Democratization is process Peace is a process. So I look at this process as in other countries. We need to take time simply, but we can there someday. So government is reluctant in some areas but goes fast in some areas. Now that we're

pushing the government to reform the assembly we understand that, we understand - someday must be. Now we are involved in democratization and we are involved in peace process. So to your question about the reform, the reform is going well but still reluctant.

**Aaron Little**: Still limited.

**Jimmy Ko**: Still limited and reluctant, they are procrastinating.

**Aaron Little**: So my last I ask everyone is: if you had President Obama sitting here what would you say to him, what would you ask him to do to help democracy in Burma?

**Jimmy Ko**: We had a meeting with the President last year. With the President's team and our team - last September.

**Aaron Little**: At Yangon University?

**Jimmy Ko**: No, no, in 2013. We had a meeting with the President [Thein Sein] in Nay Pyi Daw with our team for three hours long.

**Aaron Little**: Meeting with President Thein Sein.

**Jimmy Ko**: Yes! The meeting for three hours - the longest meeting in the history of the presidency. All I can say is that the result of meeting is this: we are in agreement to create new political culture. Which means a different culture in every word. Because for many years government solve the problems with guns and clubs and violence. These things are opposite obviously of democracy. We if want democracy, we create new dialogue culture. The government is [inaudible] The old government including the lowest authorities. We lost the culture for many years. Within two years we travel a lot, all over the country. We met millions of people, we just got a lot of things with millions of people, but the government including president Thein Sein, everybody must participate in politics. The local authorities are still trying to threaten the people to not get involved in politics. So the government, I mean the President should teach his ministers, even the lowest ranks, to advance. So we accept this President Thein Sein.

**Aaron Little**: And if you had Barack Obama here. Barack Obama came to Yangon University. What would you say to him? How can the United States make sure that democracy still advances in Burma?

**Jimmy Ko**: Our colleagues Min Ko Naing and Min Ko Gyi met with Barack Obama at Yangon university. We are the main players in this, so Americans and other countries support us. Americans and other countries should support to have the concrete national dialogue in our country. Now we are trying to have a national dialogue. We need

concrete action. Every government can accept a concrete national dialogue. I know we can solve everything by dialogue.

## APPENDIX E

### Transcript of Interview With Ko A Oo

06/29/2014 Thangyi, Burma

**Aaron Little:** Could you write your name? [translator explains to him why I want to interview him] I'm interested in how you became interested in democracy and why?

**Ko A Oo:** Because the other countries, like the U.S.A., because they are free they have freedom for everything and they have freedom to speak and everything else. In Burma we don't have anything like that. That's why I became interested in Democracy and politics. Because Democracy is freedom.

**Aaron Little:** Every democracy organization has to organize, has to inform its members, its leaders have to be able to communicate to the people in the organization. So, what kinds of technology does he use to communicate with other members or leaders.

**Ko A Oo:** There is no internet connection here. I cannot see facebook, I can not connect with people.

**Aaron Little:** Because of the slow internet connection.

**Ko A Oo:** Yeah the slow internet connection and then the financial crisis. We don't even have a brochure – we planned to have a brochure but we don't.

**Aaron Little:** So is it just word of mouth, face-to-face, how do let people know when is a meeting?

**Ko A Oo:** We use a phone.

**Aaron Little:** There is no text msg in Myanmar?

**Ko A Oo:** Yes there is. We do use message. We don't have a knowledge of technology of the internet.

**Aaron Little:** If they could bring technology to Burma, what things do you want for your organization?

**Ko A Oo:** The first way would be email and facebook. If I could have faster internet connection – that would be the best way. Yesterday, the internet was down.

**Aaron Little:** There's been a lot of changes in the last twenty years from 1988 to today, and Myanmar just opened three years ago. So was he getting any support from outside Myanmar was there anyone helping him? Financial and moral support – like encouragement? Some resources. I know Norway comes to help a little bit in Myanmar. Was there anything that people were doing to help? Or was he alone?

**Ko A Oo:** We have no support from any organizations. Swan (Shan Women's Action Network), or others like personal support. I just collect little by little. Just gifts.

**Aaron Little:** Remind me to give, sometimes I forget [laughs]. So in the outside world, in the newspapers, TV, it seems like President Thein Sein is making big reforms. What do you think about those reforms? Are there reforms? Do you think things are changing, How are they not?

**Ko A Oo:** Yes, he think he is making a reform, but it is not much – it is not effective for everybody, not effective for poor people. The changes are just for the rich people – they have more chances.

**Aaron Little:** The changes are for the cronies?

**Ko A Oo:** Yes and for rich people.

**Aaron Little:** So, what kinds of things would he like to see happen? I've heard many opinions from Kyaw Thu and U Tin Oo in Yangon, I'd like to know what he'd like to see happen – what would he like President Thein Sein to do?

**Ko A Oo:** He should give support in every section of Burma, everything that the people need. He should be like a good leader – support the little people in every section. He still has yet to take care of the little people. We want him to have a leadership skill. Thein Sein needs to be kind to *all* citizens

**Aaron Little:** What can the United States Government do to help Burma with democracy? How can we help Burma right now? You've got 2015 elections coming – what can we do to help the elections be free and fair? What can we do to help the process of reform?

**Ko A Oo:** In the election they need it to be free and fair – a true election. In the past the elections have not been true. A lot of parties, a lot of leader are corrupt – they were given money by the military. And then they got more corrupt.

**Aaron Little:** So they are cheating?

**Ko A Oo:** Yes, they are cheating. The U.S. can help to prevent cheating.

**Aaron Little:** Well how can the U.S. prevent cheating?

**Ko A Oo:** Give a word to Burmese military to have free and fair election. It's not easy to have a free and fair election – this would be very helpful. The U.S. should pressure the military to make sure the elections are free and fair.

**Aaron Little:** so let's say the military does cheat again. They don't care – let's say they cheat. How should the United States respond. What should we do if that happens?

**Ko A Oo:** Apologize to the military.

**Aaron Little:** I've heard a wide range of opinions about what the U.S. should do. From bombing Nay Pyi Daw to imposing additional sanctions. What does he think we should do?

**Ko A Oo:** Just negotiate. I do not trust the other countries that surround Burma. Because Burma is a dictatorship, other countries said that they would help Burma, that they would give pressure to our military but they never do it. They just give a word or a newsletter or something like that. I don't want to believe any country like that – like Thailand, India, and China and Bangladesh. They all just want property in Burma, or Oil.

**Aaron Little:** I heard the Chinese are coming in to live in Burma.

**Ko A Oo:** I do trust the word of Europe and the U.S. – because sometimes they can oppose the Burmese military.

**Aaron Little:** What kind role of does he see the President of the United States, in your democracy? The President of the United States makes speeches – many speeches. Yangon University speech was a big speech – what else should the U.S. president do. Should he come here more and negotiate, should he invite leader to Washington D.C.? I don't know – those are just examples. I just wonder what he thinks what the President of the United States should be doing?

**Ko A Oo:** If the American President could bring the other leaders, some famous leaders. This might be very good – if they could then speak to the Burmese people, the little people, and give a comfortable life. That's what poor people in Burma needs. He hoped that in the future – his daughter can go to another country freely and seek opportunity so that we could have a good life.

**Aaron Little:** The last question. There's going to be elections in 2015, which is going to be big, why does he think we've have these successes of reform? Why now after all of these years are things changing?

**Ko A Oo:** Things changing?

**Aaron Little:** Well, in 1988 you had a crackdown, and then Aung San Suu Kyi was under house arrest – why now are things moving?

**Ko A Oo:** It should change because in this day, a lot of developed countries – it's the right time to change.

**Aaron Little:** If Barack Obama was sitting here, what would you say to him?

**Ko A Oo:** Please help our people.

**Aaron Little:** How? Barack Obama says how?

**Ko A Oo:** Help develop education, helping for freedom. We do not want financial support – if we want work then we deserve it. We do not want to be obligated because of the money. We need medical equipment for health, our people really need help in health, education and technology. And nowadays many countries have high technology, but in Burma we have no technology. Education is more important – like in other people's countries, if they pass the university exams, they could speak and then translate the language. In Burma we cannot speak English – its not the way it should be.

**Aaron Little:** Thank you so much for helping. I'll definitely write this down and maybe the American president will hear – I plan on submitting this to the President, this study. Maybe we'll get more training here in Burma, everywhere – not just in Yangon and Mandalay.

**Ko A Oo:** What kind of training?

**Aaron Little:** Education, technology, computers, maybe more medical training. There are doctors – they work all of their lives and then they retire but they still want to help so they could come here. There's many things we could to help Burma. It's important to know what the Burmese want for themselves. I don't want to tell you 'well, you need better orange juice.' Part of democracy is understanding what the people. That's what democracy is! What do the people want and then how do we give it to them. Rich people get in the way, because they 'well, I'm higher – I need more!'

**Ko A Oo:** We really need human rights law.

**Aaron Little:** If he could distribute these [hands his surveys] to his people – to whoever he likes, I trust him. I'll be back to collect them on July 9th and then I go to Yangon. I go to Mandalay on the 2nd, then come back here, then Yangon, then Indonesia to climb a mountain.

**Ko A Oo:** You have been in Burma for many days?

**Aaron Little:** Maybe two and a half weeks?

## APPENDIX F

### Transcript of Interview With Shein Win Yee

July 9th, 2014. Dagon township, Yangon, Burma.

Author's note: This is a more conversational interview – Ms. Yee had expressed her desire to know about how Burma could democratize. Also, I neglected to hit record on my recorder – this explains why it seems that I begin the transcript in the middle of my conversation.

**Aaron Little**: He [Dr. Tun Hlaing] said that if there's no free and fair elections then the U.S. military should come! [laughs] He said, Aung San Suu Kyi, this is back in the '90's, or what it 1988 - yeah 1988. U Tin Oo, all the leaders, all said the U.S. military was preparing to come to Burma, and U Tin Oo and all the leaders said 'no, no, no, don't come - we will change the government.'

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah, we will change ourself. We are very scared of the U.S. military. Cause in Afghan we see! We are also [scared] for our land. Our land. Because if they destroy each other, the militaries - the Burmese military, the U.S. military, and Europe military - maybe if they angry with the Burmese military, they will do something, some action like destroying. People, you know...

**Aaron Little**: Are going to die?

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah! The people are going to die! They've got the guns.

**Aaron Little**: Although they have the guns, but I also heard from a lot of leaders that the people with the gun only understand the gun.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah! That's why, sometimes I get angry then I want to hold the gun! I want to [over]throw them. Because they are not, we cannot teach, we cannot teach them, to understand us, without guns.

**Aaron Little**: Right. So, Khun Than Lwin, the head of Thangyi NLD - the Committee Chairman.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah, yeah.

**Aaron Little**: I asked him what he thinks about the 2015 election and he said that it's not going to happen. He said he doesn't think it's going to happen. The government will make up some excuse or the Buddhists, the muslims, and the Christians will fight and then the military will say

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah, we want to hold the power again - they are making the conflict.

**Aaron Little**: So what do you think? Do think the 2015 elections will

**Shein Win Yee**: I don't because those people are making, the government making the conflict. Daw Aung Suu Kyi, you know, she is having some problems - she is defending human rights. Most of our people's religion is Buddhist, but Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is standing not [as a Buddhist], she is standing for the people.

**Aaron Little**: I thought that she was helping with human rights?

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah, yeah, she is only helping with human rights, but the Buddhists, you know, now we are. Because the government making conflict with - their emphasis is religious. Most of our people are Buddhist - that's why they are - you know the monks are angry with Aung San Suu Kyi they don't want to get 2015. She cannot say she Buddhist to win - the Rakhine they don't like. The Rakhine you know?

**Aaron Little**: Yeah, they don't like the Rakhine.

**Shein Win Yee**: They don't like the Muslim, she is committing to OIC (organization of Islamic Cooperation), you know OIC.

**Aaron Little**: Yeah OIC.

**Shein Win Yee**: They don't like OIC.

**Aaron Little**: So what do you want Aung San Suu Kyi to do? I mean, what should she doing? If she wants to win - what does she have to do to win?

**Shein Win Yee**: She is really the politician - I'm not one so I shouldn't say!

**Aaron Little**: Well, what do the monks want?

**Shein Win Yee**: The monks say that she is not loving to the nationality - she is not loving. Because she is married to a foreigner, she is not helping the nationality - she's helping the Islamic. Yeah, like that. Now, a lot of people don't accept this - she is not helping. We understand - she is holding human rights, she is for human rights. She is an icon. She will stand her ground, but the people cannot understand.

**Aaron Little**: They want her to take a side.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah! Yeah, this is the reason. Actually, we understand, but the government is putting vicious rumour - they are making [inaudible]. Then we'll be like the Afghanis.

**Aaron Little**: [laughs] That's very interesting! So the government is creating ethnic conflict in order to push Aung San Suu Kyi out! Wow!

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah, that's they doing!

**Aaron Little**: Wow! Very sneaky!

**Shein Win Yee**: Daw Suu is also long difficult to holding this all of this difficulty. She is explaining to the people, but you must understand they will not follow her. The crony are pushing her.

**Aaron Little**: The Cronies are pushing her?

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah, if the NLD got some funds then...

**Aaron Little**: Yeah, I heard, who was it?

**Shein Win Yee**: Kyaw Thu, he is giving a lot of donation to NLD, you know. But they don't like, but Daw Aung Suu Kyi then accept their [cronies] donation.

**Aaron Little**: Oh. So what should the United States be doing now to help the situation?

**Shein Win Yee**: I want ask, if the U.S. Army come to our country, what will happen? I want to know. [laughs]

**Aaron Little**: [laughs] I don't know. You never know - it's impossible to ever know.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah, that why I want to do this - I want to come to America. it think this is very selfish, but I don't know because cannot answer also.

**Aaron Little**: First of all the U.S. government would act, if they do come with a military, they would act in three stages: they would impose sanctions, threaten the Burmese - if you don't stop, if you do not hold elections, what they would do is just move their fleet, their navy near Burma, and then they'll threaten them - you got to do this, do this. But what they'll really look for is support within Burma, right? For example, Libya. Libyans were fighting Muhamar Quaddaffi before the U.S. came in, and the U.S. basically took aircraft - that's the most they'll do. But they're looking for the

people rising up against the government and then they'll help. I know 1988 can't happen again. It won't happen again. But the U.S. government won't let it happen again.

**Shein Win Yee**: [crying] A lot of people died at that time. Only the poor people are suffering. The cronies they can run away from here - they got everything so they can run away from here, but the people they will die. We are very scared. Who will give their place to stay? Even the government cannot help. [crying] Sometimes I want the U.S. army to bomb all of the nations - so nobody is holding the power. They all die - it's okay.

**Aaron Little**: Democracy is good because democracy usually brings peace because everyone feels like they have a say, like they have a voice. Every person has a little power. There's no one with a lot of power - everyone has little, and if you feel like your vote matters, if your vote means something, if it does something then you won't fight! Why would you fight - you just vote and then things will change.

**Shein Win Yee**: But if you can't vote.

**Aaron Little**: What do you think Barack Obama should be doing right now?

**Shein Win Yee**: Obama?

**Aaron Little**: Yeah, Obama. John Kerry, Hillary Clinton - what should they do to help? What should they do to help the situation?

**Shein Win Yee**: Maybe it is better if he goes.

**Aaron Little**: It is better if he goes? Why?

**Shein Win Yee**: Because he has a lot of advisor, Obama is not only holding the power. In the U.S. the administration is if you give advice - but here they are not effective, because they are not [of] the same [religion] of our nation.

**Aaron Little**: Can President Obama do anything?

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah, he [President Thein Sein] is like a doll, like a robot - now we are thinking he is just following U Than Shwe. Than Shwe you know?

**Aaron Little**: Than Shwe really?

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah!

**Aaron Little**: Nah!
**Shein Win Yee**: U Thein Sein is just the front of the government, but Than Shwe is still holding the power - we are still fighting the old Than Shwe regime.

**Aaron Little**: So President Thein Sein is just a puppet? A robot?

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah!

**Aaron Little**: Hmm.

**Shein Win Yee**: Actually, they are not really working.

**Aaron Little**: Wow! This is really good [the food.]

**Shein Win Yee**: Okay, Okay, thank you. [she orders food for her and her daughter]

**Aaron Little**: Maybe a small plate for her?

**Shein Win Yee**: No, No. She's got enough. She can eat a whole plate!

**Aaron Little**: [laughs]

**Shein Win Yee**: [she speaks with the server]

**Shein Win Yee's Daughter**: I don't like!

**Aaron Little**: [laughs] You do speak English! So what should the U.S. government be doing?

**Shein Win Yee**: You also asking this question - this same question! To everybody?

**Aaron Little**: Yeah to everybody?

**Shein Win Yee**: What should U.S. Army do?

**Aaron Little**: Well maybe not the U.S. Army - we're more than the Army, we have political power in the world.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah.

**Aaron Little**: Not just military.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah.

**Aaron Little**: we have economic sanctions, we can come here and speak, we can give money. Right? There's a lot of things we can do.

**Shein Win Yee**: But you know, if you have lots of money then you can give. But they will cut - they [cronies] take part.

**Aaron Little**: The cronies.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah! So even there is a lot of people are, they are also destroying their mindset by money! Because people are poor - you can not spending without something, without money there is no spending - they will do anything [for money].

**Aaron Little**: So they'll do everything they can just to survive.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah! Because is power. If I want to get money I will do what ever, food, home, or bed - whatever I can do. Most of the people are poor.

**Aaron Little**: Well it's the same in America sometimes.

**Shein Win Yee**: People can't stand the poor - can't stand [being] poor.

**Aaron Little**: So what can America do to help the poor?

**Shein Win Yee**: I think give them education and I think education is. When you give an education - you are managing for them teaching. You can teach them not to steal, not to steal. If you do not give them something, you cannot teach them - they will not follow. Even my daughter - if I want to teach her the good things, I give her first. If I want to give, ask America what can do, America give us a good leader - not Daw Aung San Suu Kyi alone. We need a lot of good leaders in many places. Like Daw Aung San. Daw Aung Suu is the right [kind of] person.

**Aaron Little**: Well, you have to choose the right person. We'll support anyone you choose, we support Aung San Suu Kyi because she has the people's support.

**Shein Win Yee**: I support her also and '88 Generation, now we can trust these people. But I think that those people recently we don't if we can trust them. Maybe I have never been [inaudible] but they can lead and we can trust. They can also more in some places. People are not just talking blah, blah, blah. They must really taking and work hard.

**Aaron Little**: Action.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah they must take action! They must work a lot for our future. We must try our best. even those young we are very busy, we are very heavy.

**Aaron Little**: It's a hard time.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah, it's a very hard time. They want to go back old situation - we can't go back! We must prepare for the future.

**Shein Win Yee**: And one more thing. [inaudible] The United Nations, if they want to open an office here they have to find an office building - all of the office buildings are crony office buildings. The UN is giving the crony a lot of money. Why is the UN giving this crony? We want to ask. That's why we don't trust NGOs from the UN, U.S., from UNHCR.

**Aaron Little**: That's a big deal.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah! But, for me I want to work at the UN office. But I cannot apply because I have no recommendation.

**Aaron Little**: You have no references?

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah, why - that's what I want to ask. I already applied and they ask me who give me recommendation. This place [the clinic where she works] I can apply by myself. But before I apply I have to the UN - they ask for references. They need that information. I have to fill out the forms for two recommendations - so who are they. At least one month rent - the old staff of UN are like that.

**Aaron Little**: One month of rent at least?

**Shein Win Yee**: Why is that? The salary is good - one month of salary if you want to work for an NGO. We have so many unnecessary steps - I can work but its not enough. These two things.

**Shein Win Yee**:  Many, many issues like this are driving people away.

**Aaron Little**: So how do you make them stay? How would you stay? What would you like? You're educated, you're smart.

**Shein Win Yee**: We are happy to leave here. Even I am educated I cannot leave here - very difficult. In the U.S. they are just concerned with - you are in U.S. and you are in

Myanmar - see? The living standards - we know. Everyday I work, but I want to ask why I stay there, why I can't stay like that.

**Aaron Little**: Why you cannot go to America?

**Shein Win Yee**: No, No, I just compare. You not hear. In America you can work good. You cannot find the differences. Here it is not the same in U.S. and Myanmar.

**Aaron Little**: Well, you could compare Thailand and Myanmar - they are very similar. In World War II, in 1945, they were in the same place. The Japanese left, America won - the British left. Here you had general Aung San. Although in Thailand there were never British. Never. It was never the King. But the King in Thailand said 'okay, now we have Democracy in Thailand - no more king.' The king on the side. Right? "I'm not going to write laws' that's what the King said. Here, General Aung San pushed the British out - you had maybe six years of democracy? And then you had General Ne Win. This is General Ne Win's country, right now. Than Shwe is just Ne Win 2.0. So, the problem is. I'll give you an example: let's say I'm a very rich man, a crony. He comes to this restaurant and he buys lots of food for himself. He's really fat. His check is 50,000 Kyat (50 USD) - he pays for the check. Now if you gave alll that man's money to one thousand people - they have enough money to eat 1000 meals, right? 1000 meals every day for 20,000 Kyat or 10,000 kyat - that's one million kyat a day, every meal. So the rich man, he takes all the money, but he can't spend it. It's too much to spend! He can't do it. So what does he do? He goes outside the country - he buys a plane. He goes to Europe for vacation. He goes to America. So the money of the rich isn't used here, it leaves. Also, a rich has one mind, one brain, one way to solve a problem, one way of driving, of way of sleeping. One way! Just one way! A thousand people have a thousand ways. A thousand solutions, a thousand ideas, but if they're poor

**Shein Win Yee**: They are getting enough time to solve their problems.

**Aaron Little**: Exactly.

**Shein Win Yee**: Because they're spending all of their time trying to find something to eat! Very heavily working you know?

**Aaron Little**: I had a conversation with someone - a rich man. I said you have a nice car, oh BMW. Very nice. Maybe 100 million Kyat - very nice car. I said, look at your road - the road is awful, it's a bad road. You can only go 30 miles an hour, you can't go fast. The car is very nice, but your road is bad. I said 'you have a lot of money, you like to see movies, listen to music? Well it's not possible with the Internet!" Internet is so slow that it's impossible. So, you can't do anything - watch a movie on the Internet or listen to music. I said, you drink bottled water - in America we drink water out of the tap, its clean.

**Shein Win Yee**: Water here is a problem, water here is not good. Water is not expensive out of the tap, but we have to buy. It's a waste of money. The government is not doing their work properly. They not do. I've been to Singapore, In Singapore you can use out of the tap, you can drink. Here water

**Aaron Little**: I'm not saying that all rich people [in Burma] are bad.

**Shein Win Yee**: No, not all.

**Aaron Little**: But most.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yes, most.

**Aaron Little**: The problem is, like your child, like your daughter - if you give your daughter anything she wants, all the time. She just asks and you give it to her. You give, and you give. She becomes like a little Ne Win.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah, that's rights.

**Aaron Little**: A human being is the same. If I always gets what I want all the time - I become a dictator. I say, "Oh yeah, I'm a big person." A human being needs laws, equality, psychologically we need it because a human being without someone to say "No, you cannot do that!" Like you tell your daughter "No!" A human being needs to be told no, because we can't do it ourselves. We can't tell ourselves no. I can't tell myself no. And when you have a lot of money, people don't tell you no.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah! Here it's a reality.

**Aaron Little**: That's the problem. It's not the money, it's the desire to have more money. Right?

**Shein Win Yee**: Actually, it's the mindset. Here they're not thinking that money is just a paper - here they are thinking that money is power.

**Aaron Little**: Money is power - money is always power. Money is always power.

**Shein Win Yee**: Actually they are intellectual thinking.

**Aaron Little**: If the elections aren't free and fair there will be more sanctions.

**Shein Win Yee**: They are very afraid of the poor - we have no more. They will be getting a big problem.

**Aaron Little**: Right. So I think in 2015 things will be good. It will be good. I think there will be problems this year between the Buddhists and everyone else [laughs]. The Buddhists are the majority, so the government is trying to convince the buddist and Aung San Suu Kyi, the NLD, the SNDP, all the democratic parties are not good for Buddhists. [laughs] I don't think the people will believe it. So they'll make problem like Mandalay, it'll come here to Yangon - you'll have Martial Law or curfew, it will happen. They want problem to show that Aung San Suu Kyi

**Shein Win Yee**: is making the war.

**Aaron Little**: But it won't work, it won't work.

**Shein Win Yee**: It won't work.

**Aaron Little**: I don't know - when I write my book, I'll send it to you.

**Shein Win Yee**: I'll read it.

**Aaron Little**: It's easy to use the fist or gun, it's hard to listen. It's easy to push but its hard to listen.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah, it's hard to listen. Being a little bit violent is not easy, not easy. But we have pass.

**Aaron Little**: Gandhi pushed the British with no violence.

**Shein Win Yee**: The difference is, that time and this power. They fight only the British - the British are holding the gun, but they are come to here but they are still following their law. Not without disobeying. This [Burmese] military is not like the British.

**Aaron Little:** Yeah that's true, this military has no problem shooting.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah. That's grandfather, grandmother, the old age said the British is better than this government.

**Aaron Little**: Well, yes.

**Shein Win Yee**: If we had known better, we don't ask the British to go back.

**Aaron Little**: That's the problem. The British took their system with them. They did not leave a system of government. When they left they left with the government.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah. This government, they don't want to leave. They want to rule forever you know - it's amazing. The Buddha says nothing is permanent. Here, this government, why is this government permanent?

**Aaron Little**: [laughs] Yeah, the Buddha was right, nothing is permanent, but things change but not because you sit down and watch them change. You must make the change. Things don't just change,

**Shein Win Yee**: We have to do it ourselves.

**Aaron Little**: Yeah, you have to do it yourself. Even the government, the crony - they're all human beings. That's the key to democracy, showing how I'm a human being, you're a human being - we can talk. But like Muammar Gaddafi, you know Muammar Gaddafi? He couldn't listen.

**Shein Win Yee**: Not only the government people, not only the big people or crony - even some people when they work in the government they don't want to listen from us. They don't to listen to VOA or BBC, but we listen to everything - that's why we know.

**Aaron Little**: Well, yeah. In American we have a saying - money talks, I listen.

**Shein Win Yee**: The system is very poor - very poor system. People are very poor. Most people are poor.

**Aaron Little**: The system is broken.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah poor and broken.

**Aaron Little**: If things go smoothly in 2015 things will change - no choice. Election or no election. And my study is asking. The U.S. says we one to do 1,2,3,4,5 for Burmese people - we think the Burmese people need 'this' right! But they ask the Burmese people.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah they are only asking the government.

**Aaron Little**: They're asking the government. And no one comes to ask you and Kyaw Thu - and Kyaw thu is a big guy - even John McCain when he came, saw Kyaw Thu. Why would I talk to the President if he's not doing his job?

**Shein Win Yee**: I think things are getting worse. The law are not for the people, the law are for the gun. If you got money, then whatever you do, you will win. You will win at the high court, you know. Even if you make mistake, yeah you will win. They will cover[up]. But if you are poor, you go to prison.

**Aaron Little**: Yeah, that's not law, that's not justice.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yeah, that's not the law - that's why we want to change it. Actually we have so many things to do for this country.

**Aaron Little**: Yes, so many things.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yes, and business is more and more input. Not only the government needs changing - the people themselves need to change their mindsets. We must do the quick run, nothing is free - in Myanmar now we want everything free, because civil society, free education, why they want free - of they want free, they are poor, but show limits. They should limit their free - you what I mean? [she means limit the free services in society]. Not everything for free. If they have enough then they must pay. I'm okay, I don't want anymore, but no body's paying. Nobody will say [that].

**Aaron Little**: There are some things that should always be free I think. Education should be free.

**Shein Win Yee**: Yes, Education should be free and Health. Health should be free also.

## APPENDIX G

### Transcript of Interview With U Tin Oo

June 27th, 2014. NLD Headquarters, Yangon, Burma.

Author's Note: U Tin Oo is the Vice Chairman of the National League for Democracy.

**U Tin Oo:** My name is U Tin Oo. My duty is the Chairman of the Committee of Patrons – the National League for Democracy. [inaudible]

**Aaron Little:** So I'm from the University of Minnesota and I'm writing a book about Burma and the transition to democracy in Burma. So I'm handing out surveys in Burma as many surveys as I can and I guess my first question is if you would be able to hand out the surveys for your members so that I can get their opinions.

**U Tin Oo:** You wish to reach someone else other than NLD?

**Aaron Little:** I want them to fill out the survey. It asks them to give their opinion about U.S. president speeches.

**U Tin Oo:** Yes, most of the American Presidents are great [inaudible]. All of them but especially Bill Clinton helped us in the time of our hectic days when Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was under house arrest and many of us were under internment. By that time we were encircled in every place known alive. For a couple of days after that we understand that we need to use, at that time there was a very important United Nations session where the former president Bill Clinton gave a speech who clearly mentioned – his speech was about ten minutes but nearly a third of the speech given there gave us the inspiration and that inspired us and the leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. [inaudible] she is not allowed to moved anywhere. So I urge this assembly the release of this person. To be taken quickly [inaudible]. So we are very happy. We are happy to hear his voice through our devices. Another, Another, things is that the chief counselor they . He visited the dignitary near here and all of the embassies to ask for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at the same time he visited the southeast nations. So by my advice that the message conveyed by the president to be spoken out for our cause. So much of the success of the movement is given the Bill Clinton. And the last president Barack Obama we had was the first president to visit here. First President ever to visit here.

**Aaron Little:** So these are the speeches [Aaron Little shows U Tin Oo the survey] and statements, actually that United Nations speech by Bill Clinton is in here.

**U Tin Oo:** But what you need to understand here is that by the time the new leadership under the new president Thein Sein, so at that time our headquarters were under siege and we were given an ultimatum that no more NLD. That NLD dismissed already. So he

released that and this ultimatum was repeated every year that NLD had to be dismantled that their enemy would just fade away. So Daw Aung San Suu Kyi asking them to meet for a discussion and after that meeting with representative of the Union of Burma, after that we saw a small trickle of light of democracy. A very small trickle of light of the democracy seen that we could carry out. So Daw Sung San Suu Kyi gave a very strong, and very effective speech to the leader to all of the parties, to all of the NGOs, and other official of the administration and she just said that she wants to help benefit the future of Burma. So that we prosper. So by that speech they understand that and there is some sort of substance that can carry out to promote the condition of the population of Burma. So, by that time the representative who carry a small note that they would work out the problems that would promote in all respects that which in bad shape. That would be economic, education, and so forth that they would work out. Then she immediately after the meeting with the President [Obama]. At that time there were various leaders of the United States, very honorable leaders of the United States including one in particular Senator McCain who met her here and another important leaders of the United Nations and spoke about the promotion of human rights. And the most important leader of the United States, Hillary Clinton. At that time we understand that you wish to release DAASK then you will lift some of the economic sanction, but then you must make very visible steps toward democracy. And they agreed. The first thing they did was to release all of the political prisoners. But firstly at that time they released all of the important and esteemed leaders and gradually they released all of the leaders of NLD and the leaders of other party. They just proclaimed that sanctions were lifted. All that remains are the sanctions of the EU. The EU sanction will probably be lifted. And so the Hillary Clinton that those sanctions that made them suffer will occur twice. So they will double suffer if they don't make reforms. clearly made known that those benefits must be made to the needy to those who suffer the most but that help must be transparent. At the same time Clinton said it would be allowed to let businessmen to invest in Burma. So this is the present that we are in now.

**Aaron Little:** I'm curious about what kind of steps can the United States to help promote Democracy, to help promote reform, and to help Burma?

**U Tin Oo:** In the mind of the United States they are not given a clear pass from Burma in its relationship to North Korea. So, they must be totally clear about the relationship with North Korea especially the technology shared and the nuclear power. But in the mind of the United States they are still skeptical that this government in doing something not in the full liking of the American people. Now you remember the flight of Malaysia Airline. It totally vanished. Now we read the papers that the government of Malaysia that there's some clue. But this is a symptom of the real views or rumours that the plane could not be detected because of a very technology given by the Chinese. [inaudible]

**Aaron Little:** What do think, in your opinion, what do you think led to the success of the reforms in Burma. Why do you Burma is reforming. I spoke with Kyaw Thu, I had an interview with him and I asked him the same question about why he thinks Burma is reforming. And I'd like to ask why is Burma reforming? Why now?

**U Tin Oo:** [laughs] We only experience a parliamentary democracy for about ten years after our independence. Only ten years. Other than there was a constitutional cu-de-ta. So after that, through the reforms initiated with the former prime minister, the civil defense minister General Ne Win, take control power through arms. A very absolute government. He carried out assassinations. Even though we received our independence, from the very start, we do big party had a very different opinion about the success of governmental program of Burma. Other parties had a very different idea and they went underground. Until now we did not enjoy even the slightest bit of democracy. So everybody now wishing this country to be making more freedoms and more human rights. We want to enjoy our independence. Everybody in their mind want to achieve peace! But even if there is peace we must gain the trust of the other nationalities in Burma.

**Aaron Little:** And how would you do that?

**U Tin Oo:** Yeah, yeah, now our policy, when we get into parliament, is first the rule of law and the second is to amend the constitution. The last one is that all the hostilities must be stopped. There must be a cease fire and then all of the leaders of the nationalities and organizations will come to a place to find an agreement to maintain peace. And at the same time, if you wish to make peace you must make yourself create trust. Now there is a big talking about the cease fire now. But the solution of these people is not achieved yet. Now lastly their going to talk. But this sort of thinking is not working now. Everybody is thinking they still want to continue fighting up until the time of the talks. But the military said that, yes if you are really sincere you'd better place your arms under the care of the authorities. Now later the military say that you can hold arms during the talks. So one the arms issue and the NLD are distinct issue, there is a big problem to be settled. Why is there being payed attention to so many problems in this country after the military took power. They now respect health, economy, education many sort of things, after the taking of power by the military, deteriorated. So everyone is now getting together to make peace. That's the main thing. Everybody wants peace. The NLD position is that you have right to have equality. And equal status achieve by all religions. And another one is that economic conditions needs to benefit all of the people. And the third one is that we profess the federal state, we promise that there will be civil state under federalism. So rest of the issue will be thoroughly discussed about the distribution of wealth. So all of the majority of people must be present to that, must be attending to that. So, we are saying that we will be more clever. So that is why after reforming our National League for Democracy our policy is that we will give very many opportunities and privileges to these groups. Another one is than our youth and our

womenfolk will given more equality. [points to Aung San Suu Kyi's picture] She is a lady! That is why we are giving more democracy to ladies thank them. After that we have a lot of older people from the 1988 generation who are still working. There must be some sort of distance from them for the youth. Soldier people need to include the youth. Our NLD formed as a youth organizations. So all the youth just were

Not a big business coming to Burma. So, two years ago there was a very prominent, very distinguished, very able investor come to here. If they do wish to come our country is still unfit – they can't come here to have big factories because we have very little electricity. You probably have noticed that. So we got to improve our infrastructure for big business. This must be firstly solved. There are some representatives of big business here. But they are still holding back on their investment because they are waiting for the government to make sure that their money will not go to the cronies.

**Aaron Little:** But how do you make investment without the money going to the cronies?

**U Tin Oo:** The people don't want to give any money to the cronies, but some of the cronies maybe want to combine together the process of Burma. Sometimes this happens but most of time their work done by them and their efforts are not to the benefit of the people. They have many official in their pockets, we call it kickback. Whenever we hear about the cronies or these sorts of people – they don't want to visit anything about the cronies but we must make the cronies and use their money to help people and the parliament must make a sort of fragment sector policy that can share some and be fair to the middle class. The upper class and the ruling class they must design America so some of the investment must be used better than before so that money is used for the sake and benefit who are in great need. We need investment you see? That is why the cronies must come in with their money, but instead of that, many of the cronies are holding land and forcible taking land. Every village understand about that. They are using the military. So we issues about the land. They sublet and are given rights. In the previous constitution there is a one word: all of the land is belonging to the state. So the military people when they go to take the land, they say 'we are the state, that's why we take that.' That's a big problem. Much land is being taken by the cronies with the help of the military. That's been a problem. Now they gradually solve the problem, but there has been no effect at all that has been written in the papers. So for the time being the big business are just taking and what time are they going to flourish and use their business here. One step and has been taken with the mistrust of the businessman here has been with banking. Some of the foreign banks are pouring in here. we feel that we must save with our act that most of the development enjoyed by all of the people here. But if they have to come a sort of reciprocate act, they will come here with huge amount of investment. Many banks here, rumor bank or military bank, many banks, even all of those banks combined a bank from the outside is bigger. Big problem. So if they are

allowed to come here then we have to have some assurance to enjoin the middle class to the poorest class and to the upper class.

**Aaron Little:** How would you do that?

**U Tin Oo:** In the parliament. In the parliament the majority of those military men. That is a big problem – Only a very small part of the government and upper division are not. That is why we are out to change the authority of the military in order to get more civilian people into the Parliament so that we could get more people who are flexible. They [military men] are very rigid – rigidly rigid you see. We need people who are willing to change the constitution and not be so rigid.

**Aaron Little:** Well to that point, you're having elections in 2015. What can the U.S. do to help those elections be free and fair?

**U Tin Oo**: The United States government State Department has spoken out that there must be an authority to review the constitution which is not compatible with the principles of democracy. But they [Burmese government] will say that we are a sovereign state – why are you interfering? They will say that. Now cleverly, the United States approaching, they understand that, to get more of the entire process of the democracy, gradually moving. But you cannot force them to 'do this, do this.' They [government] don't know how to have democracy. They don't understand how to have an economy, they only understand how to fight. Firstly, we must get them out of from the powerful [inaudible] administrative out of a sort of legion of the led. We need civil men, experienced civil men. This is why we need more educated youth to get into the civil. Now they are preparing for the single objective to getting into the election and to become the president. This is the present conditions. We don't like them you see, but the defense industry has already influenced the parliament – the public cannot influence the defense industry. It's bad. This must be eradicated – the democracy reforms must be for the people.

**Aaron Little:** So how are things going with reforming the constitution? I've read a lot that there's a lot of resistance with Aung San Suu Kyi. She's not being successful at

**U Tin Oo**:  Yeah, yeah there is a cost a to her position that a lot of man deny to her [inaudible]. In Burma, those who want to be President must have the quality with the politics and the economic, and the social and firstly he or she must have the full knowledge of military. That is the main. That means that women cannot be President, because they do not know anything about military matters. This means that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is already marginalized. Another one is that those who have a sort of connection with the foreigner is not able to be president. So now, see 194173 this is their case and their policy. One thing that through the time of the [world] war [II] our country was invaded twice. When the Japanese came in and going and the Allied forces, the British, they just came. They took over through the process of white paper. White

paper means that 1937 act, there is an ammendment that says they are allowed to take many of sort the [forces] from Burma. At that time the British won the War but they deteriorated economically, so they want get their resources from the occupied country. So there is a great revolution here so that the old governor was thrown out and by that time General Aung San becomes the head of Echara. At that we wrote the constitution, and out of the constitution, we developed economic a policy at this place know as harran de villa and there he just formulate our economic principle. He just score all of the organization of the merchant, the Chinese merchant, other foreigner merchants here. We tried to be independent. Their no mention of nationality or foreigners, only suggested that all the ministers must not be foreign, that we wanted to govern ourselves. Everything was really about trying provide a good economic you see. They just defined this as who is married to a foreigner and the children of that marriage to the foreigner not allowed to get any sort of power. Even though they just say that about the President. The foreign ambassador happens to a British subject! The vice prime minister, the cabinet minister, his son is married to a British Girl you see? So another one is that a person who is very proficient the Indian nationality but she is appointed Minister of Commercial and Religious Authority and his brother was given. Why? We want to see a harmonious group who want to do good for Burma, those who deserve to hold their positions regardless of their racial differences, all of the religious group. Even the little connection of the foreigner is just a joke. Now the previous leader, General Ne Win, he married an Italian girl – no problem! But at the time of the forming of the NLD, General Ne Win gave the message that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi must already be marginalized. This is the order delivered by the late General. These orders are derived from the mindset already in the orders above you see. This is the mindset. Now we are under deliberation, we are fully concerned with the progress of the internet, many of the sort. So these people of the general's generation don't understand. That is why the becoming credibility of the hardliner is going down and the softliner is becoming. We are waiting for the time.

**Aaron Little:** What do you think about the 2015 elections?

**U Tin Oo**: Ah, you better ask why do you for military regime? To die, or to say, or to live? We want to live and fight for liberty of a democracy. So that is why we will win. By the way, you will observe our sort of isolation. But we must define clearly. Without asking the SLORC, we denounce the SLORC – they are the ruling arms. Usually we just forget everything. If not this election then the next. We try our best, by peaceful means. Even the winner will be working with us, we will be safe.

**Aaron Little:** I guess my last question is, you said changing the mindset through university and education, I'm from the University of Minnesota, what can America do to help education.

**U Tin Oo**: We need to totally reform the system. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is already thinking that the education is very tired. She is already thinking how to promote and improve this educational system because during the colonial time we were being education. Myself educated for the services of the ruling elite. Only you had to read the book, only those written by the British, even those where we learned about the history of Burma was written by the British. We only had to serve, to were only to render the service for their benefits. That was in the time of our colonial rule. After the time of the British we have never experienced our own businesses, we only learn how to serve our oversees. Our business are the same as before, you see? Working with the science and civil, and some the elemental things. Now we've gone too far – everything is serving the military system. So all the political science is driven from education, they are scared of the student, because they hate the democracy. That is why it is very strict. The very beautiful campus of the University of Rangoon, which was established before the war, very prestigious is divided into the localities. For Law you have to go far and away into the jungle! For the medicine you will probably go to another track. For technology another. Only the very. The University will gradually become a forest – that is way to take down an institution! Another way they just create one class who just an educated class, by this they avoid contamination by the ruling and the monks. [inaudible – another person in the room decided to have a mobile conversation] Lastly, ordinary peoples I like the English, or British, or Ireland – why do you like this government. But you will get rich off of intimidation and form an electorate and separately they'll be given very sort of beautiful privileges. So they'll form a new class. So that will help us change because we need help not only in energy, the political and those who not very much agreeing with most of the politics but who the NLD will include. The Lady has traveled around all over and *she listens* what sort of steps they wish to take. She explain very beautifully to the outside peacefully – She is getting some of the outside educated to come back, most of them fled away. So, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi understand that – she create the youth agenda. Then all the youth understand that how to take up their education. If real reform does come, it will be from the institution youth network throughout the country. Here in Rangoon is our NLD headquarters, but we have offices throughout the country that are mostly meant for those youth. After that big tidal wave in 2007, many youth who understand the educational system, who were educated in the outside came back. They work with us now. They help create the reform. After that generally we started our goals of getting those who could afford to give money for education, many of this sort of explanation. And after those including the nationalities, nearly 200 have been opened. At that same time, all those people who help on the outside, like the United States and European countries and United Nations were with us. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, at the time she visited two of the countries and gave a speech so that they understand. They are giving help like the United States. Which she wasn't famous yet but she had very good sort of visit and there she realize the education and the youth studying there – what is their good in the system, what is their difference. They explain to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi: only one thing, creative thinking. This is what think so now we reform the national educational network. Out of that those entrepreneurs

those visionaries. And at the time of NLD, the workers train there and work here with us. They just finished their metriculation. So in the year 2012 we disembark – we studied who pledge for our discussion – Rangoon. The representatives of those institutions and we started the educational system which are freely critical thinking education. Critical thinking. So the other ministers are already greatly going down and in its place we are hoping to do free critical thinking education. These are the priority already given by those who fled away in the time of fear at that for the doctor. Gradually we just make them, which are to be sort last one, after that we have some experience from the tension. They want to work with us and they give us help for the universities. In 2014 after a series of forums discussing here outside and at that time we had a good exchange with those scholars with the schools of the United States and the United Kingdom and we are exchange with our students. And many, many other countries we exchange our students. At the same time she just also ask Japan to create the education the same as though. So the government know this but they don't put him in. They form the government of what they want. They are people who already trying to stop it – we don't like. We start with our own self. That's why we start with our own bill for the educational reformation system. We open a case before them – but they just form them own selves their government. That mean, their idea is that they want to hold, they want to control the education system. So we put on the case of the Bill 2D in Parliament but they are now in the constitution and they are going to comply the same as before. They are going to fight as before. They want the same as before with the two tier system with the central authority. So we have to change everything, the educational system, everything. The system that is abusing the freedom. Gradually. And giving more of the process to the ethnic nationality.

**Aaron Little**: My last question is: what is your opinion of Barack Obama and those who represent him, Hillary Clinton and John Kerry?

**U Tin Oo**: Great political significance after the visit of Obama. The first time a U.S. politician came here was, Clark Gable a very great Senator. [leaves room to aks who the name of the Senator was and comes back] Clark Campbell. At that time he just followed many of the politicians of the party, including those who are in opposition to us. But, he was ahead of his time. But second time, the representatives of the United Nations, Ban Ki Moon. Then great sort of problems came and after that Ms. Clinton came. She is very powerful. The message of the United was very powerful and clearly said 'you'd better get the lessons of the other friends.' And another time when we were clear with you that to help  the economic situation here. On principle we don't like and we are that sort. We want to have a very good economic situation, but from your side you'd better show from your side that you are following the principles of democracy and we must see the progress of the democratic. Then if you lift one opposition to the democracy, then you're going to get help from the United States. So that is the main thing that they said when they came here. He clearly he gave a very clear message! What the United States is intending to do after reign of President Obama. Recently he is the one firmly against

this regime. Every topic. Every topic. But now there is softer message. Gradually, very reasonable message. They do understand. So, another came this time Secretary of State Clinton. Then Hillary softened their side. After the visit of Barack Obama – that break the ice. But, but, but but, They clear do not clear their mindset yet – you'd better tell your people that, in the United States that need to come and try and again to soften the mindset – you still have clear the mindset and to soften the mindset of this ruling class!

**Aaron Little:** So should we keep on coming?

**U Tin Oo**: You'd better visit intermediate, meeting, meeting, meeting sharing your ideas and telling problems. Then they have take that. Many of their conceptions come from China – the people who which created the great conception of the military regime. Which probably clash – the general probably do not like it. We also need more of your American press coming. You'd better go to Mandalay and understand what is going on there. There is half of the city that has been taken by the Chinese there. You'd better see that in Mandalay all mostly Chinese. Every shop is now owned by Chinese. So they understand. That is why the people understand. That why NLD people understand. That is why they do not see our cause – they prevail and look to the East. The NLD wants balance. We have a good connection with Taiwan, but we do not profess any sort of politic. Now we are getting people from the United States – many sort of humanitarian activists. Now we wonder how the United States will solve the current problems rising because of the San Ku Ku islands contested between China and Japan. What China is doing to Japan we understand all about that. What we want is stay out of Chinese politics, we want peaceful coexistence. This is the policy of the non-alignment countries. So, the last one: President Aung San Suu Kyi sounds very good. On the West a bigger country India. On the East bigger country China. We are a country who is small. So that's why, yes sounds very good., So long as the leaders are on a very good terms. But when there is something going wrong, attacking each other we cannot take sides. We are a small country, we must be wise. So that is why we are looking to the United Nations. Or we are looking, who is the very strongest nation is the world. So we think it is the United States. So we going to look you to make these nations in Asia peaceful. I personally talk to his excellency the President and said "thank you Mr. President, you are taking an interest in the East Asia." You'd better see the East Asia, not the Middle Asia. So that would be better. China is expanding to much their economic zone! No, problem, problem. It is very shameful that they send their technicians over, they never send their economic development. But they gradually do it. But we are only the Market Oriented Economy. One day there will be a problem there, it will make a big trouble. That is why we think it is far better to have solidarity with the United Nations for the ethnic nationalities. It is important, important that our country keep our nationality and staying to China to them. But we little bit have an understanding with India – they profess democracy. The democratic nations never go to war with each other, they always solve their problems through discussion. Not North Korea, not the China. North Korea is once the subordinate of China, the people of

China. The leader Kim Il Sun is one the member of the politburo of the Communist Party of China. So he brought with him his idea. So when you talk to North Korea, you see the problems of China. When we met the leaders here, we say that now you are becoming one populations here and you'd better seek peace. So, you'd better come again and again. Ask people to come to change the people's here to come to change their mindset.

**Aaron Little:** Well thank you very much for speaking with me.

**U Tin Oo**: But your United States still have people in Iraq now. I do disagree. If you get your hand in there, you have to follow the whole body inside! It's a problem. So you have suffered a lot for your very brilliant sons. Many of the lives the people there. Let them take care of themselves. The most effective is have help from the outside. Don't get in.

## APPENDIX H

### Transcript of Interview With U Htut Oo

July 3rd, 2014. Mandalay, Burma

Author's Note: U Htut Oo in The Chairman of NLD, Mandalay.

**Aaron Little:** Could you write your name here so just I make I spell it right? So the first question I ask, a leader, anybody in democracy is: why did you become interested in pro-democracy movement? Why did you want to work for Democracy in Myanmar?

**U Tin Htut Oo:** [speaks there is a translator who did not introduce herself] Because we don't have democracy and lack of human rights and development and progress has been gradually decreasing. This is a good time for us, for him to have such a good leader in Aung San Suu Kyi.

**Aaron Little**: Was there anything in personal life that made him feel strongly about Democratic freedom? I spoke with Kyaw Thu, and Ne Win, General Ne Win stole his family's land, and threw his brothers and his family into prison, right? So I was wondering if something like that happened to him or his family that made him feel passionate about democracy and freedom.

**U Tin Htut Oo**: No.

**Aaron Little:** Okay, good. that's good for you [laughs]. Every political organization needs technology, needs to communicate with its members, what kinds of communication do you use to spread the message of Aung San Suu Kyi or your message of the party, to bring people to a rally, to protest, what ever - to spread the message of your party. What kind of technology do you use?

**U Tin Htut Oo:** Internet, personal email, by mail delivery.

**Aaron Little:** Do you use facebook or

**U Tin Htut Oo:** We have facebook, but normally we don't use facebook - we use personal email to deliver the message. I am also learning how to use Internet.

**Aaron Little:** Is there a reason why you choose to use personal email or mail to communicate - why those two particular technologies?

**U Tin Htut Oo:** Why do we choose to use?
**Aaron Little:** Or is that all you have?

**U Tin Htut Oo:** No that is all we have [laughs].

**Aaron Little:** So I asked a lot of leaders, if they could have any technology - what would they like to use? What do you think is the best way to communicate if it's not email or mail - what would you like. If we developed technology here what would you like to use?

**U Tin Htut Oo:** Your question is beyond our knowledge - we cannot give any advice or suggestion whether we would like this or this.

**Aaron Little:** Okay, that's fine. Ye, was part of the 1988 generation and then Bill Clinton started many sanctions against Myanmar and then George W. Bush, and Barack Obama - they gave many speeches, actually they're in this survey. How aware was he of those speeches? And were they important to his political struggle.

**Translator:** Which American President?

**Aaron Little:** Well of the three, or really any American president.

**Translator:** Which speech have influence on the country?

**Aaron Little:** Well if he heard the speech and if it was important to him and the NLD cause.

**U Tin Htut Oo:** I can't remember a specific speech, but anyway all of the speeches from the President of the United States affect the country, [have an] effect on democracy.

**Aaron Little:** How? How did have effect?

**U Tin Htut Oo:** It's like a help in changings.

**Aaron Little:** Did it put pressure on the Junta or did it encourage people to fight for democracy. I know some leaders said that the speeches helped them know that the world was watching and was supporting them.

**Translator:** For encouragement. Okay I have to ask him.

**U Tin Htut Oo:** Because of the speech, it's make people to not fear what is democracy and it makes them support the NLD party and to know what the party is doing.

**Aaron Little:** President Thein Sein has created some reform, Aung San Suu Kyi was released, you had a by election, she was elected to Parliament, and some other things. First what do you think about those reforms? I've heard many different opinions about President Thein Sein and those reforms. What does he think about those reforms.

**U Tin Htut Oo:** To get our vote for Democracy he still needs to do a lot of things.

**Aaron Little:** What things does he need to do?

**U Tin Htut Oo:** He needs to do a lot of things really with in actions, so maybe he wants more in actions in democratic changes. For example, by seeing the constitutional amendment he didn't like encourage. He's been hesitant to move this constitutional amendment forward.

**Aaron Little:** Is there anything the American President should be doing to push for more reform? What should he do more?

**U Tin Htut Oo:** What you're doing now is that you're helping. You believe that Myanmar is changing and you help the government but its really not. In reality, you should discuss firstly with our leader Aung San Suu Kyi and she should control the help. This is where or what - specifics situation to their exact place exact where it or what they need. So now, what he means is that you give generally, and that it doesn't go to the right people.

**Aaron Little:** In a couple of my interviews, people have actually said things are getting worse. Because the money is in and the prices of food, water, electricity, gas are going up, so the poor people suffer even more! That ridiculous, that's awful if that's true. [laughs]

**Translator:** [laughs] Yes.

**Aaron Little:** If you had the President here, and you could tell him, where should we be putting our money? What organizations would you like us to give to?

**U Tin Htut Oo:** So, he gave you an example. there is a foundation, Oo Win Thin Foundation - this really helped the poor people. In Mandalay there are a lot of organization that I'm working with, these social welfare organizations.

**Aaron Little:** Could you write the name down? [translator writes name down] Ah Thu Kah - I know this organization! That's Kyaw Thu's organization. Okay, what did he say.

**U Tin Htut Oo:** He wants the money from your government direct to the people who are in need. Like Oo Win Thin, who are trying to help in Metula - that's between here

and Yangon. That's where there is a fight between Buddhist and Muslims. He is the Parliamentarian here and he is trying to save the lake. This really helps. When money comes to this Thu Ka it really helps - so we are not only working for funeral cases, we just help the poor people, old age people, English student class and for tour guide courses.

**Aaron Little:** If President Obama or John Kerry were sitting here, what would you like to tell them to do help make the 2015 elections free and fair? Because that's the next step. What kinds of things should he be doing? What kinds of things should he be saying?

**U Tin Htut Oo:** So the first problem is that the Chairman of the Union election commission is from one side of USDP, so maybe he can make a lot of rules for one side, for one sided party. This needs to be free and fair election commission - this is the first one. And the second one is by seeing the rules - they are making for 2015, we have to submit or we have to object, this is the second thing.

**Aaron Little:** So the rules for the 2015 election, what kinds of rules do not like, for example?

**U Tin Htut Oo:** For example, only the candidate can campaign - So they just want to stop the speech of our Lady on behalf of our candidate.

**Aaron Little:** Ah, so Daw Aung San Suu Kyi can't campaign for another candidate.

**U Tin Htut Oo:** This kind of rule - they're making for the 2015 election, so we have to say no or yes.

**Aaron Little:** That's a tricky rule - very sneaky. Are the people here in Mandalay aware of NLD? It seems that NLD is very popular everywhere in Myanmar, I've heard pretty much 80% in every city is going to vote for NLD right? Are there any rules that would prevent you from winning an election?

**U Tin Htut Oo:** Maybe just because of the religion, but now a days people are more educated and they know what is the tricking and what is the right things. People come to realize.

**Aaron Little:** The last question is: there have been successes in NLD, lots of successes in the last three years - why do you think you have been more successful recently than previous years? Aung San Suu Kyi was under house arrest for a long time, why now? Why now are things changing? Why does it look like you're winning?
**U Tin Htut Oo:** The reason is we have the right leader.

**Aaron Little:** You have the right leader. Well Aung San Suu Kyi has been your leader been your leader for a long time - things didn't change a lot until maybe four years - is that right. So why is it things have been changing in the last five years? Why didn't it change before? Why is it changing now?

[there seems to be an argument with some of the men in the room with the chairman]

**U Tin Htut Oo:** In 1990 a lot of NLD was also famous in this situation in the past, but 1) is after 1990, because of the pressure from the government, the pressure didn't change the people who support the NLD, but they didn't get into participation only. Now people get in front of the situation, and the second reason is that this is the time because the government they could not make the country progress. Everything in our country become worse. The third one is - because of the sanction and pressure from around the world, from other countries.

**Aaron Little:** That's exactly what I wanted to know. And what did the Chairman say?

**Translator:** The same thing.

**Aaron Little:** If you could tell the American people something, what would you like to tell them?

**U Tin Htut Oo:** Give more support!

## APPENDIX I

### Survey: The Path of Democracy in Burma—

### The Diplomatic Presidency and Barack Obama

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**Page One**

**1) Which U.S. President best represents your political values?**
( ) Bill Clinton
( ) George W. Bush
( ) Barack Obama

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**Presidential Political Views**

**2) Supporting the spread of democracy, with respect for human rights, advances the values that make life worth living. It also helps nations in the information age to achieve their true wealth, for it lies now in people's ability to create, to communicate, to innovate.**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Disagree

**3) And now, as more wealth flows into your borders, we hope and expect that it will lift up more people. It can't just help folks at the top. It has to help everybody. And that kind of economic growth, where everybody has opportunity -- if you work hard, you can succeed -- that's what gets a nation moving rapidly when it comes to develop.**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Disagree

**4) That is one of the main differences between us and our enemies. They seek to impose and expand an empire of oppression, in which a tiny group of brutal, self-appointed rulers control every aspect of every life. Our aim is to build and preserve a community of free and independent nations, with governments that answer to their citizens and reflect their own cultures.**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Disagree

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**Secretaries of State Political Views**

**5) The United States is committed to helping the Burmese people through increased humanitarian assistance that targets those in desperate need and builds local capacity. Burma's leaders must come to realize--after five decades of sustained internal conflict, economic mismanagement, and international pariah status—that Burma needs a better way forward, a way that does not rely on suppression but**

**rather strives to create a truly democratic and prosperous future for the Burmese people.**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Agree

**6) The United States has been a Pacific nation for nearly two centuries. And to this day, our unfailing support for Asia's success remains rooted in the same basic principles: the promotion of peace and the rule of law; freedom of commerce and exchange and support for the just aspirations of all people.**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Agree

**7) On this ninth anniversary of the last free elections in Burma, our message to the Burmese military is to reverse course and begin to move in a democratic direction. In recent decades, peaceful transitions to democracy have occurred on five continents. There is no reason it should not happen in Burma, and no reason for the military to fear that its own rightful role in Burmese society would be jeopardized as a result.**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Disagree

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**Strategy for Reform**

**8) Last month, I announced new sanctions on the leaders of the regime and their cronies. Should the regime continue to ignore calls for a true democratic transition and the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners, the United States is prepared to lead international efforts to place more sanctions on the regime.**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Disagree

**9) We intend to begin a direct dialogue with Burmese authorities to lay out a path towards better relations. We will tell the Burmese that we will discuss easing sanctions only if they take actions on our core concerns. We will reserve the option to apply additional targeted sanctions, if warranted, by events inside Burma.**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Agree

**10) Burma's international isolation is not an inevitability, and that the authorities in Rangoon retain the ability to secure improvements in relations with the United States as well as with the international community. In this respect, I once again call on the SLORC to lift restrictions on Aung San Suu Kyi and the political opposition, to respect the rights of free expression, assembly, and association, and to undertake a dialogue that includes leaders of the NLD and the ethnic minorities and that deals with the political future of Burma.**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Agree

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**Strategy for Reform**

**11) Choose the statement by an American official that you think is the best strategy for creating reform in Myanmar.**

( ) We need to see fundamental progress towards democracy and respect for human rights before relations with the USA could be improved or the USA would consider lifting the ban on World Bank loans to Burma imposed since 1988.

( ) The United States will tighten economic sanctions on the leaders of the regime and their financial backers. We will impose an expanded visa ban on those responsible for the most egregious violations of human rights, as well as their family members.

( ) The United States stands steadfastly with the Burmese people who aspire for a peaceful, prosperous, and democratic Burma that respects human rights and the rule of law. To that end, we will continue to pursue parallel strategies of pressure and principled engagement. The United States remains open to future possibilities of dialogue with Burma's leaders.

**12) Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following options:**

[ ] My Religious Views
[ ] My Political Views
[ ] My Income
[ ] My Gender
[ ] I need to protect my family
[ ] Punish bad people: _____
[ ] Be fair
[ ] I want justice
[ ] I want to forgive
[ ] The strong should not hurt the weak
[ ] Law and Order
[ ] Poor people need help
[ ] Those who have money and power deserve it
[ ] People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong
[ ] other: _____

**13) The Burmese representative here has just responded to the number of allegations and I think his response is quite typical of the problem of an authoritarian government that doesn't get it; that blames the victim for the problem and their ability to disregard the fact that Aung Sun Suu Kyi is popularly elected and that the people she is trying to see are popularly elected speaks volumes about their lack of understanding about what it means to have some kind of a form of Constitutional government.**

( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Disagree

**14) By attacking Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters, the Burmese junta has finally and definitively rejected the efforts of the outside world to bring Burma back into the international community. Indeed, their refusal of the work of Ambassador Razali and of the rights of Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters could not be clearer. Our response must be equally clear if the thugs who now rule Burma are to understand that their failure to restore democracy will only bring more and more pressure against them and their supporters.**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Disagree

**15) It is important that the Burmese people gain greater exposure to broader ideas. It's also important that Burmese leaders, including Burma's next genera- tion of leaders, realize that there is a more positive way ahead. These efforts may take time, but the United States is ready to commit to that long-term effort.**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Agree

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**Areas of Concern**

**16) You need to reach for a future where the law is stronger than any single leader, because it's accountable to the people. You need to reach for a future where no child is made to be a soldier and no woman is exploited, and where the laws protect them even if they're vulnerable, even if they're weak; a future where national security is strengthened by a military that serves under civilians and a Constitution that guarantees that only those who are elected by the people may govern.**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Agree

**17) Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following options:**
[ ] My Religious Views
[ ] My Political Views
[ ] My Income
[ ] My Gender
[ ] I need to protect my family
[ ] Punish bad people: _____
[ ] Be fair
[ ] I want justice
[ ] I want to forgive
[ ] The strong should not hurt the weak
[ ] Law and Order
[ ] Poor people need help
[ ] Those who have money and power deserve it
[ ] People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong
[ ] other: _____

**18) Every young democracy in Southeast Asia now faces a similar challenge: building democratic institutions that function transparently and accountably. Institutions like the rule of law, an independent judiciary, and a free media help to ensure that leaders remain responsible to their people. In other places, however, democracy still faces determined opponents, and where freedom is under attack, it must be defended.**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Agree

**19) Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following points of view?**
[ ] My Religious Views
[ ] My Political Views
[ ] My Income
[ ] My Gender
[ ] I need to Protect my Family
[ ] Punish Bad People
[ ] Be Fair
[ ] I want Justice
[ ] I want to forgive
[ ] The strong should not hurt the weak
[ ] Law and Order
[ ] Poor people need help
[ ] Those who have money and power deserve it
[ ] People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong
[ ] other: _____

**20) We have pointed out that Burma's prosperity and stability depend on having a political system that reflects the wishes of the Burmese people. And we have stressed the importance of initiating a dialogue with the democratic opposition, and representatives of ethnic minority groups. Sadly, the authorities have responded by making a terrible situation even worse. They have stepped up their intimidation of the democratic opposition and arrested more elected members of Parliament. And they continue to increase military expenditures, while urgent social needs go unmet.**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Agree

**21) Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following points of view?**
[ ] My Religious Views
[ ] My Political Views
[ ] My Income
[ ] My Gender
[ ] I need to Protect my Family
[ ] Punish Bad People

[ ] Be Fair
[ ] I want Justice
[ ] I want to forgive
[ ] The strong should not hurt the weak
[ ] Law and Order
[ ] Poor people need help
[ ] Those who have money and power deserve it
[ ] People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong
[ ] other: _____

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**Recent Reforms**

**22) What is your opinion of how U.S. President Bill Clinton's strategy was effective in helping create reform in Myanmar**
( ) Very Dissatisfied ( ) Dissatisfied ( ) Neutral ( ) Satisfied ( ) Very Satisfied

**23) What is your opinion of how U.S. President George W. Bush's strategy was effective in helping create reform in Myanmar?**
( ) Very Dissatisfied ( ) Dissatisfied ( ) Neutral ( ) Satisfied ( ) Very Satisfied

**24) What is your opinion of how U.S. President Barack Obama's strategy was effective in helping create reform in Myanmar?**
( ) Very Dissatisfied ( ) Dissatisfied ( ) Neutral ( ) Satisfied ( ) Very Satisfied

**25) Your country recently came out of a long period of isolation from much of the world due to what U.S. Presidents called human rights abuses. Do you agree that the U.S. should directly engage with world leaders who are accused of human rights abuses?**
( ) Strongly disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Agree

**26) Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following points of view?**
[ ] My Religious Views
[ ] My Political Views
[ ] My Income
[ ] My Gender
[ ] I need to Protect my Family
[ ] Punish Bad People
[ ] Be Fair
[ ] I want Justice
[ ] I want to forgive
[ ] The strong should not hurt the weak
[ ] Law and Order

[ ] Poor people need help
[ ] Those who have money and power deserve it
[ ] People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong
[ ] other: _____

**27) Which U.S. President do you most agree with?**
( ) President Clinton
( ) President Bush
( ) President Obama

**28) Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following points of view?**
[ ] My Religious Views
[ ] My Political Views
[ ] My Income
[ ] My Gender
[ ] I need to Protect my Family
[ ] Punish Bad People
[ ] Be Fair
[ ] I want Justice
[ ] I want to forgive
[ ] The strong should not hurt the weak
[ ] Law and Order
[ ] Poor people need help
[ ] Those who have money and power deserve it
[ ] People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong
[ ] other: _____

**29) What should the President of the United States do to help Myanmar?**
( ) Help Small Business
( ) Help bring more tourists
( ) Send more aid to NGO's
( ) Help give better education to Burmese people
( ) Help Build Roads
( ) Bring western corporations to Myanmar
( ) other: _____

**30) As your country reforms, should the government try in court those who committed human rights abuses in the past?**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Agree ( ) Disagree ( ) Strongly Agree ( ) Undecided

**31) Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following points of view?**

[ ] My Religious Views
[ ] My Political Views
[ ] My Income
[ ] My Gender
[ ] I need to Protect my Family
[ ] Punish Bad People
[ ] Be Fair
[ ] I want Justice
[ ] I want to forgive
[ ] The strong should not hurt the weak
[ ] Law and Order
[ ] Poor people need help
[ ] Those who have money and power deserve it
[ ] People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong
[ ] other: _____

**32) As your country reforms, should the people forgive those who committed human rights abuses in the past?**
( ) Strongly Disagree ( ) Disagree ( ) Undecided ( ) Agree ( ) Strongly Agree

**33) Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following points of view?**
[ ] My Religious Views
[ ] My Political Views
[ ] My Income
[ ] My Gender
[ ] I need to Protect my Family
[ ] Punish Bad People
[ ] Be Fair
[ ] I want Justice
[ ] I want to forgive
[ ] The strong should not hurt the weak
[ ] Law and Order
[ ] Poor people need help
[ ] Those who have money and power deserve it
[ ] People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong
[ ] other: _____

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**About You**

**34) How interested are you in politics?**
( ) Very interested
( ) Interested
( ) Uninterested
( ) Very uninterested
( ) Undecided

**35) How do you receive news of political events?**
( ) Television
( ) Radio
( ) Internet
( ) Newspaper
( ) Magazine
( ) Word of mouth
( ) other: _____

**36) Occupation: Please pick the answer that best describes your occupation**
[ ] Business Man
[ ] Small shop owner
[ ] Service Industry employee
[ ] Construction Worker
[ ] Tea Shop owner
[ ] Bar shop owner
[ ] Teacher
[ ] Student
[ ] Farmer
[ ] Lawyer
[ ] Driver
[ ] Medical professional: _____
[ ] other: _____

**37) How often do you read a newspaper?**
( ) Daily
( ) Weekly
( ) Monthly
( ) Yearly
( ) Never

**38) How often do you use the internet?**
( ) Daily
( ) Weekly
( ) Monthly
( ) Yearly

( ) Never

**39) Gender**
( ) Male
( ) Female

**40) Income**
( ) 1000 to 5,000 U.S. Dollar a Year
( ) 5,001 to 10,000 U.S. Dollar a year
( ) 10, 001 to 20,000 U.S. Dollar a Year
( ) 20,001 to 40,000 U.S. Dollar a year
( ) 40,001 to 80,000 U.S. Dollar a year
( ) 80,001 to 150,000 U.S. Dollar per year
( ) More than 150,000 U.S. Dollar per year

**41) What is your highest level of education**
( ) Elementary School
( ) Middle School
( ) High School
( ) University: B.S.C or B.A.
( ) M.B.B.S.
( ) Master's
( ) PhD

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**Thank You!**

## APPENDIX J

### Survey Informed Consent Form

**Survey Consent Form**

The Path of Democracy in Burma: The Diplomatic Presidency and Barack Obama

You are invited to be in a research study about Pro-Democracy movements operating in the Myanmar Republic. You were selected as a possible participant because of your direct or indirect involvement in a democratic organization either as a leader, member, or citizen observer. This study seeks to understand how a nonviolent democratic movement was able to successfully encourage reforms in the Republic of Myanmar.

This study is being conducted by: Aaron Little, Department of Writing Studies, Ph.D. Candidate.

**Background Information:**

The purpose of this study is to gather the opinions of Burmese about pro-democracy movement, politics, and protests.

**Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:
Participate in a ten part survey with Aaron Little about your experiences with pro-democratic movements.
Here are some examples of the questions I will ask you:
"What is your opinion of recent political reforms?"
"What is your opinion of speeches and statements made by U.S. Presidents Barack Obama, George W. Bush, and Bill Clinton?"

**Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:**

This study has minimal risks related to a record that could identify you as belonging to a particular political organization. The benefits to participation are: providing further understanding of how non-violent social movements are able to encourage reforms from reluctant leaders.

**Compensation:**

No compensation will be offered for participation.

**Confidentiality:**

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will ask permission from participants to use real names; if no permission is granted, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you as a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. Our survey will be made public and will be used in Aaron J. Little's research.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota, your congregation or its institutional authorities. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**Contacts and Questions:**

The researchers conducting this study are: Aaron Little. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact them at Department of Writing Studies, 619-634-6756, littl267@umn.edu.

The advisor for this project is Dr. Ronald W. Greene, 612-625-1815 www.green179@umn.edu, Chair of the Communication Studies Department. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.
***You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.***

Do you wish to remain Anonymous?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, do not write your name and address.
If no, please write your name, address, and occupation:

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

## APPENDIX K

### Interview Informed Consent Form

**Interview Consent Form**

The Path of Democracy in Burma: The Diplomatic Presidency and Barack Obama

You are invited to be in a research study about Pro-Democracy movements operating in the Myanmar Republic. You were selected as a possible participant because of your direct or indirect involvement in a democratic organization either as a leader, member, or citizen observer. This study seeks to understand how a nonviolent democratic movement was able to successfully encourage reforms in the Republic of Myanmar. This interview will take no more than sixty minutes of your time.

This study is being conducted by: Aaron Little, University of Minnesota, Department of Writing Studies, Ph.D. Candidate.

**Background Information:**

The purpose of this study is to gather the opinions of Burmese about pro-democracy movements, politics, and protests.

**Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:
Participate in a one-hour digitally recorded interview with Aaron Little about your experiences with pro-democratic movements. Here are some examples of the questions I will ask you:
"What is your opinion of democratic movements which have been and are operating within Burma?"
"How did you learn of President Obama's involvement in the political changes that have occurred in Burma?"
"How can President Obama and his representatives help improve the political and social freedoms in Burma?"

**Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:**

The study has minimal risks. To ensure confidentiality of your identity I will not record your names – your opinions and responses will be made anonymously. To further ensure your confidentiality, I will use an Olympus WS-803 Voice Recorder that will change your voice so that, in the unlikely event of encrypted files being compromised, no one will be able to identify you by your voice.

The benefits to participation are: providing further understanding of how non-violent social movements are able to encourage reforms from reluctant leaders.

**Compensation:**

Ten U.S. dollars will be offered for participation.

**Confidentiality:**

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will ask permission from participants to use real names; if no permission is granted, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored on a password protected hard drive and further secured with TrueCrypt 256 bit AES encryption software. Only the Primary Investigator, Aaron J. Little and his adviser Dr. Ronald W. Greene will have access to the records. Our interview will be made public and will be used in Aaron J. Little's research.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota, your congregation or its institutional authorities. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**Contacts and Questions:**

The researchers conducting this study are: Aaron Little. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact them at Department of Writing Studies, 619-634-6756, littl267@umn.edu.

The advisor for this project is Dr. Ronald W. Greene, 612-625-1815 www.green179@umn.edu, Chair of the Communication Studies Department. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

***You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.***

## APPENDIX L

### Burma Survey Brochure (English and Burmese)

Author's Note: This is a tri-fold brochure designed to be folded – it was not submitted to respondents as an 8x11 document. It was also formatted as a landscape page.

Have Your Say Today!

We make it easy for you to participate! We can sit on a park bench and talk, meet for tea, or eat and talk in a restaurant wherever is easiest for you. You can decide if you want to take a survey or an interview - and you always have a choice in what you'd like to say.

YOU'RE MAKING A DIFFERENCE


Participating in this study may bring understanding to how the United States government was able to help the government of Myanmar to reform. Your answers may help researchers understand how democratic movements may achieve their goals without the use of violence or military intervention from foreign governments.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
331E Nolte Center,
315 Pillsbury Drive SE,
Minneapolis, MN 55455
U.S.A.

MYANMAR INTERVIEWS SURVEYS

We'd like you to participate in a Survey or Interview and ask your thoughts about U.S. involvement in Myanmar in the past. We also want know how you think the United States can better help Myanmar today and in the future. Please us your opinion so that we better help your government reforms and economy. education

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover℠

**Researching Democracy in Myanmar**

The research data gained in these interviews will help construct a political theory that may have wide-sweeping implications in explaining the shape of U.S. foreign affairs for years to come. Your interview responses may place the reforms in Myanmar in a global and international context where scholars and U.S. officials may better understand the changing dynamic between national social movements and world leaders.

## WHAT TO EXPECT...

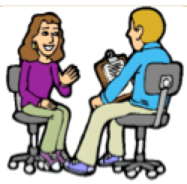
We know that asking to take taking time out of your busy day is asking a lot. We want to make sure that you know what kinds of questions we'll ask and how we'll use that information.

### INFORMED CONSENT

Every interviewee will receive a written guarantee that unless they decide otherwise, their identity will never be disclosed to anyone but the interviewer. We also secure all information in encrypted files.

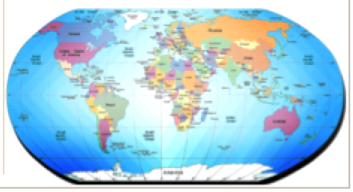

### OUR QUESTIONS

We want to know whether you agree with presidential statements and speeches. We want to know what the United States can do better in helping the people of Myanmar achieve its goals of political reform and



### OUR RESEARCH

Your responses will help researchers better understand how the President of the United States is able to assist democratic movements throughout the world. This information is critical to understanding how social movements can achieve their goals.



## ယနေ့သင့်စကားအရာဝင်ပါစေ

သင်ပါဝင်ရာတွင် လွယ်ကူအောင်လုပ်ဆောင်ထားပါတယ်။ ပန်းချီတစ်ခုကနုံကလေးပေါ်မှာထိုင်ပြီး ပြောကြမလား၊ လှေကျည်ဆိုင် ထိုင်ကြမလား၊ ဒါမှမဟုတ် စားသောက်ဆိုင်တစ်ခုမှာစားရင်းဆွေးနွေးကြမလား။ သင့်အတွက်အဆင်ပြေဆုံးတစ်ခုကိုရွေးချယ်နိုင်ပါတယ်။ လေ့လာချက် (Survey) မှာပါဝင်မလား (သို့မဟုတ်) ဆွေးနွေးခန်း (Interview) လုပ်ကြမလား။ သင့်ဆုံးဖြတ်ချက်ပါ။ နောက်ပြီး သင်ဘာပြောချင်တယ်ဆိုတာလဲရွေးချယ်ခွင့်ရှိပါတယ်။

## သင့်ကြောင့်ပြောင်းလဲမှုများဖြစ်ပေါ်လာပြီ။


ဒီစာတမ်းထဲမှာပါဝင်တဲ့အတွက် မြန်မာပြည်သို့တိုးတက်ပြောင်းလဲမှုများ (Reform)မှာအမေရိကန်အစိုးရအနေနဲ့ ဘယ်လိုပါဝင်ကူညီခဲ့သလဲဆိုတာကို အများနားလည်စေနိုင်ပါမယ်။ သင့်ရဲ့အဖြေများကြောင့်၊ နိုင်ငံခြား အစိုးရများ စစ်ရေး၊ အကြမ်းဖက်မှုသုံးပြီး ဝင်ရောက်စွတ်ဖက်စရာမလိုဘဲ၊ ဒီမိုကရေစီလှုပ်ရှားမှုများ နှင့်ပန်းတိုင်သို့ရောက်ရှိခဲ့ပုံကို သုတေသနပြုစုသူများ နားလည်စေနိုင်မှာဖြစ်ပါတယ်။

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
331E Nolte Center,
315 Pillsbury Drive SE,
Minneapolis, MN 55455
U.S.A.

## မြန်မာ့ဆွေးနွေးခန်းနှင့်လေ့လာချက်များ

အမေရိကန်အစိုးရအနေနှင့် မြန်မာပြည်မှာမည်သို့မည်ပုံ၊ ပါဝင်ပတ်သက်ခဲ့သလဲဆိုတာနဲ့ပတ်သက်လို့ သင့်ရဲ့အတွေးအမြင်များကိုဆွေးနွေးခန်း (Interview) သို့ လေ့လာချက် (Survey) မှာပါဝင်စေချင်ပါတယ်။ နောက်ပြီးအမေရိကန်အနေနဲ့ မြန်မာပြည်ကို ယနေ့နဲ့အနာဂါတ်အချိန်မှာ ဘယ်လိုပိုမိုကူညီခဲ့သလဲဆိုတာနဲ့ပတ်သက်ပြီး၊ သင့်အတွေးအမြင်ကိုသိရှိလိုပါတယ်။

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover℠


## မြန်မာ့ဒီမိုကရေစီကဲ့သုတေသနပြုစုခြင်း

ဒီဆွေးနွေးချက်ကြောင့် ရရှိလာတဲ့ သုတေသနအချက်အလက်တွေဟာ နိုင်ငံရေးသိအိုရီတစ်ခုကို ဖြစ်ပေါ်လာစေမှာပါ။ နောင်နှစ်ပေါင်းများစွာအတွက် အမေရိကန်အစိုးရရဲ့ နိုင်ငံခြားရေးအမြင် အယူဝါဒသဘောထားတွေရဲ့ ပုံစံအနေအထားမှာ ဒီသီအိုရီက ကျယ်ပြန့်စွာ ပါဝင်နေမယ်လို့ယူဆပါတယ်။ သင့်ရဲ့တုန့်ပြန်ဆွေးနွေးမှုကြောင့် မြန်မာ့တိုးတက်ပြောင်းလဲမှုများ (Reforms) ဟာ ကမ္ဘာနိုင်ငံတကာ အလယ်ကိုရောက်ရှိလာမှာပါ။

ကမ္ဘာဦးဆောင်သူများနဲ့ နိုင်ငံတစ်ခုရဲ့ ပြည်သူ့လှုပ်ရှားမှု (National Social Movements) ကြားက အခြေအနေတွေ ဘယ်လိုရွေ့ပြောင်းလာသလဲဆိုတာကို ပညာရှင်တွေ ပိုမိုနားလည်စေနိုင်ပါလိမ့် မယ်။

## ဘာတွေ့မျော်လင့်ထားပါသလဲ။

သင့်ရဲ့ အလုပ်များနေတဲ့ နေ့ထဲက အချိန်တွေဖဲ့ပေးရတယ်ဆိုတာ နားလည်ပါတယ်။ ဘယ်လိုမေးခွန်းတွေ မေးမြန်းပြီး ဒီတွေ့ရှိချက်တွေကို ဘယ်လို အသုံးပြုမှာလဲဆိုတာကို သင်ကိုယ်တိုင် နားလည်တာကိုပဲ အလိုရှိပါတယ်။

### အသိပြုသဘောတူညီချက်

ပါဝင်ဆွေးနွေးသူတိုင်းအတွက် သင့်သဘောတူညီချက်မရဘဲ၊ သင်မည်သူမည်ဝါဆိုတာ ဆွေးနွေးသူမှလွဲ၍ အခြားသူများ မသိရှိစေရပါဆိုတဲ့ အာမခံချက်စာရွက် ပေးအပ်မှာဖြစ်ပါတယ်။ မှတ်တမ်းအားလုံးကို စကားဝှက် အကာအကွယ်ပြုဖိုင်တွဲများဖြင့် လုံခြုံစွာသိမ်းဆည်းထားမည်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။


### ကျွန်တော်တို့ရဲ့မေးခွန်းများ

သင့်အနေနဲ့ အမေရိကန်သမ္မတတွေရဲ့မိန့်ခွန်း များနဲ့ မှတ်ချက်များအပေါ် သဘောတူညီမှုရှိ မရှိသိလိုပါတယ်။ မြန်မာပြည်သူလူထုအနေနဲ့ တိုးတက်ပြောင်းလဲရေး (Reform) နဲ့ စီးပွားရေး အောင်မြင်မှု (Economic Success) ဆိုတဲ့ပန်းတိုင်ကိုရောက်ရှိဖို့၊ အမေရိကန်နိုင်ငံဘယ်လိုပုံမို ကူညီရမလဲဆိုတာ ကျွန်တော်တို့သိရှိလိုပါတယ်။

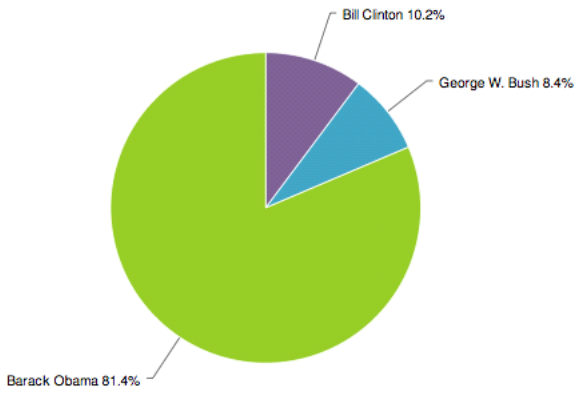
### ကျွန်တော်တို့ရဲ့သုတေသန

သင့်ရဲ့တုန့်ပြန်ဆွေးနွေးမှုကြောင့်၊ အမေရိကန်သမ္မတတွေ ကမ္ဘာနဲ့အုပ်မိ၊ ဒီမိုကရေစီလှုပ်ရှားမှုတွေမှာ ဘယ်လိုအကူအညီ ပေးသလဲဆိုတာသုတေသနပြုစုသူတွေ ပိုမိုနားလည် စေနိုင် မှာပါ။ ဒီတွေ့ရှိချက်တွေဟာ ပြည်သူ့လှုပ်ရှားမှု (Social Movements) တွေအနေနဲ့သူတို့ရည်မှန်းချက် ပန်းတိုင်တွေကို ဘယ်လိုရောက်ရှိစေလဲဆိုတာကိုနားလည်ဖို့အတွက် အလွန်ကိုအရေးကြီးပါတယ်။

# APPENDIX M

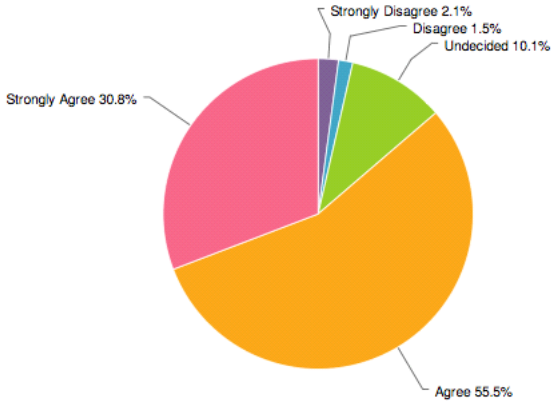
## Survey Results

1. Which U.S. President best represents your political values?



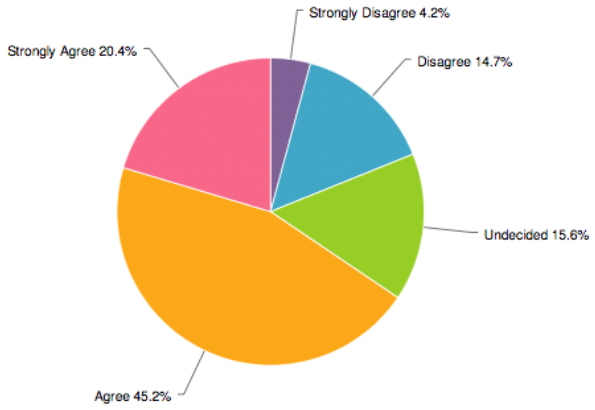

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bill Clinton | 10.2% | | 44 |
| George W. Bush | 8.4% | | 36 |
| Barack Obama | 81.4% | | 350 |
| | | Total | 430 |

2. Supporting the spread of democracy, with respect for human rights, advances the values that make life worth living. It also helps nations in the information age to achieve their true wealth, for it lies now in people's ability to create, to communicate, to innovate.



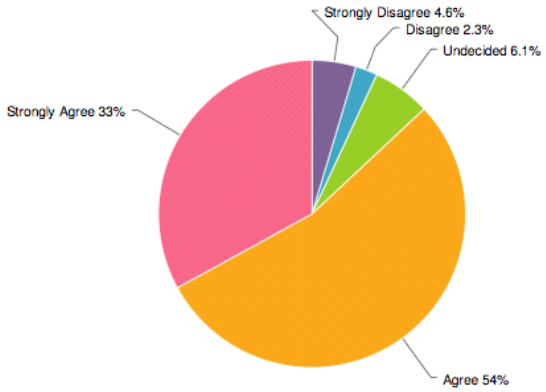

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 2.1% | | 10 |
| Disagree | 1.5% | | 7 |
| Undecided | 10.1% | | 48 |
| Agree | 55.5% | | 263 |
| Strongly Agree | 30.8% | | 146 |
| | | Total | 474 |

3. And now, as more wealth flows into your borders, we hope and expect that it will lift up more people. It can't just help folks at the top. It has to help everybody. And that kind of economic growth, where everybody has opportunity -- if you work hard, you can succeed -- that's what gets a nation moving rapidly when it comes to develop.



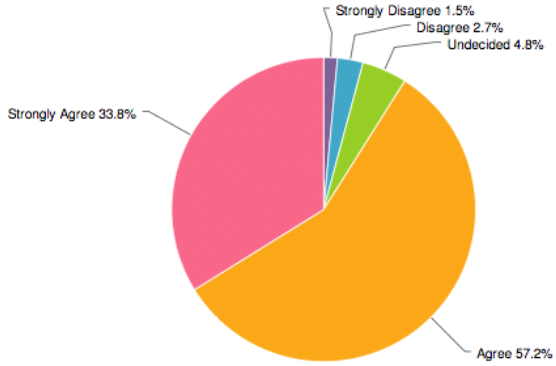

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 4.2% | | 20 |
| Disagree | 14.7% | | 70 |
| Undecided | 15.6% | | 74 |
| Agree | 45.2% | | 215 |
| Strongly Agree | 20.4% | | 97 |
| | | Total | 476 |

4. That is one of the main differences between us and our enemies. They seek to impose and expand an empire of oppression, in which a tiny group of brutal, self-appointed rulers control every aspect of every life. Our aim is to build and preserve a community of free and independent nations, with governments that answer to their citizens and reflect their own cultures.



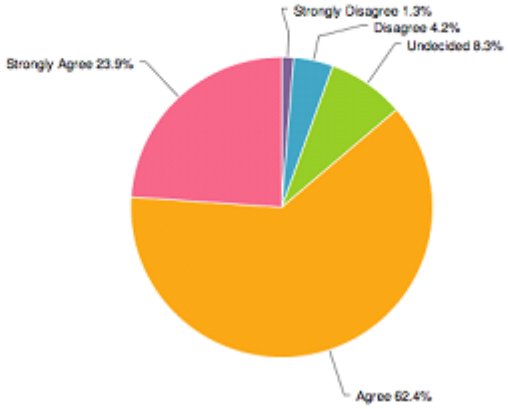

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 4.6% | | 22 |
| Disagree | 2.3% | | 11 |
| Undecided | 6.1% | | 29 |
| Agree | 54.0% | | 257 |
| Strongly Agree | 33.0% | | 157 |
| | | Total | 476 |

5. The United States is committed to helping the Burmese people through increased humanitarian assistance that targets those in desperate need and builds local capacity. Burma's leaders must come to realize--after five decades of sustained internal conflict, economic mismanagement, and international pariah status—that Burma needs a better way forward, a way that does not rely on suppression but rather strives to create a truly democratic and prosperous future for the Burmese people.



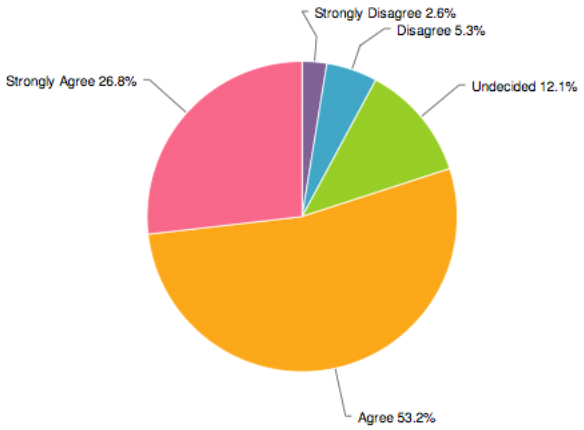

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 1.5% | | 7 |
| Disagree | 2.7% | | 13 |
| Undecided | 4.8% | | 23 |
| Agree | 57.2% | | 274 |
| Strongly Agree | 33.8% | | 162 |
| | | Total | 479 |

6. The United States has been a Pacific nation for nearly two centuries. And to this day, our unfailing support for Asia's success remains rooted in the same basic principles: the promotion of peace and the rule of law; freedom of commerce and exchange and support for the just aspirations of all people.



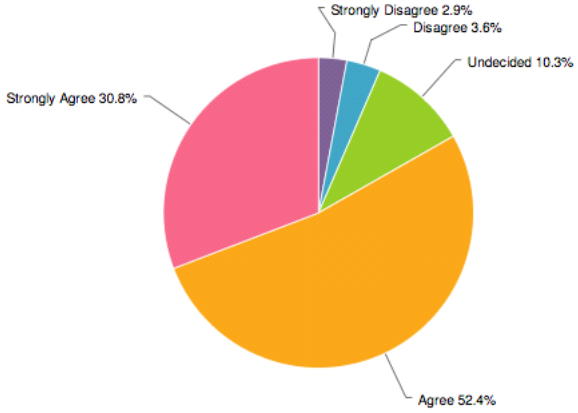

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 1.3% | | 6 |
| Disagree | 4.2% | | 20 |
| Undecided | 8.3% | | 39 |
| Agree | 62.4% | | 295 |
| Strongly Agree | 23.9% | | 113 |
| | | Total | 473 |

7. Our message to the Burmese military is to reverse course and begin to move in a democratic direction. In recent decades, peaceful transitions to democracy have occurred on five continents. There is no reason it should not happen in Burma, and no reason for the military to fear that its own rightful role in Burmese society would be jeopardized as a result.



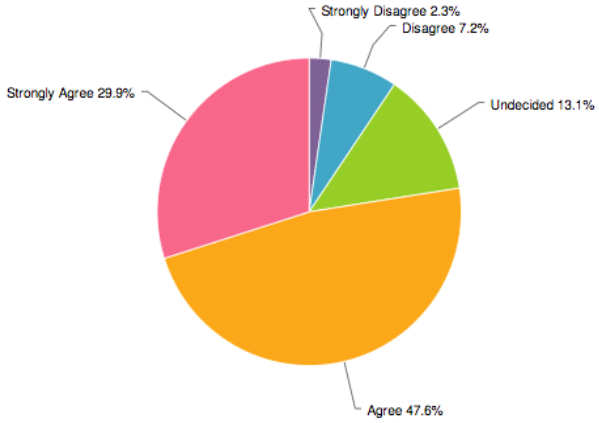

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 2.6% | | 12 |
| Disagree | 5.3% | | 25 |
| Undecided | 12.1% | | 57 |
| Agree | 53.2% | | 250 |
| Strongly Agree | 26.8% | | 126 |
| | | Total | 470 |

8. Last month, I announced new sanctions on the leaders of the regime and their cronies. Should the regime continue to ignore calls for a true democratic transition and the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners, the United States is prepared to lead international efforts to place more sanctions on the regime.



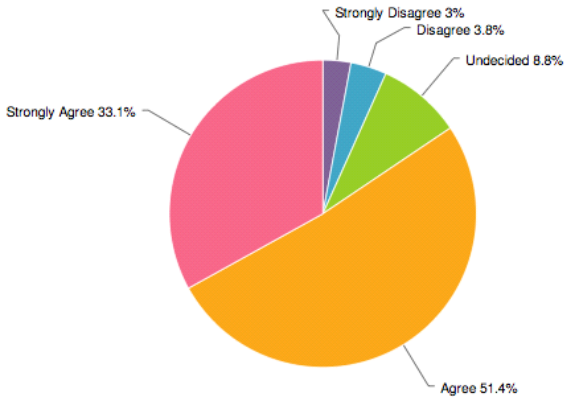

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 2.9% | | 14 |
| Disagree | 3.6% | | 17 |
| Undecided | 10.3% | | 49 |
| Agree | 52.4% | | 250 |
| Strongly Agree | 30.8% | | 147 |
| | | Total | 477 |

9. We intend to begin a direct dialogue with Burmese authorities to lay out a path towards better relations. We will tell the Burmese that we will discuss easing sanctions only if they take actions on our core concerns. We will reserve the option to apply additional targeted sanctions, if warranted, by events inside Burma.



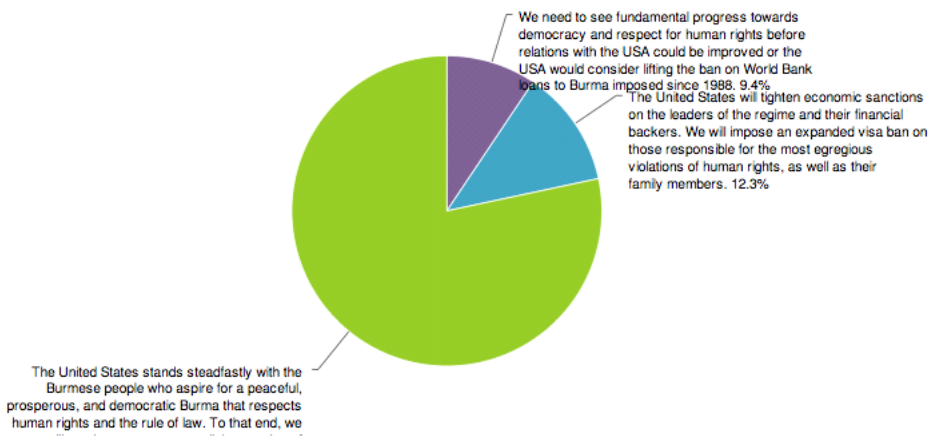

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 2.3% | | 11 |
| Disagree | 7.2% | | 34 |
| Undecided | 13.1% | | 62 |
| Agree | 47.6% | | 226 |
| Strongly Agree | 29.9% | | 142 |
| | | Total | 475 |

10. Burma's international isolation is not an inevitability, and that the authorities in Rangoon retain the ability to secure improvements in relations with the United States as well as with the international community. In this respect, I once again call on the SLORC to lift restrictions on Aung San Suu Kyi and the political opposition, to respect the rights of free expression, assembly, and association, and to undertake a dialogue that includes leaders of the NLD and the ethnic minorities and that deals with the political future of Burma.



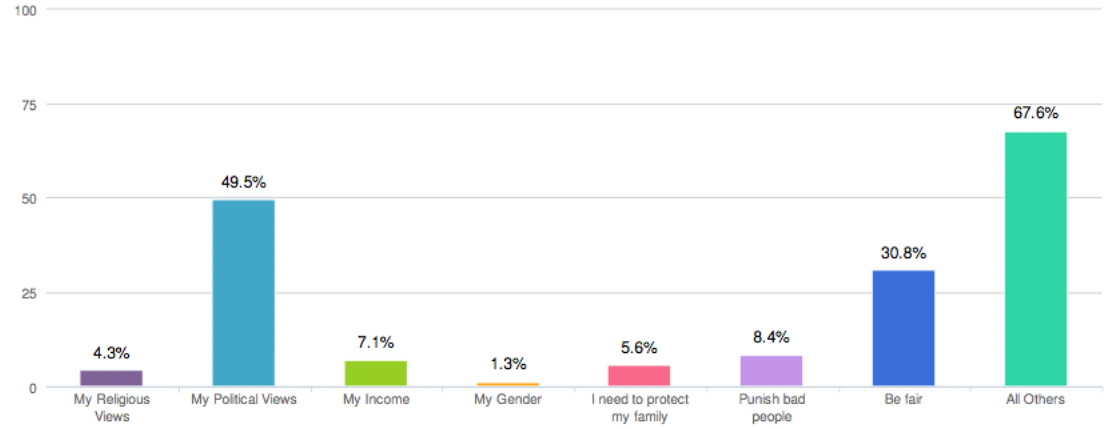

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 3.0% | | 14 |
| Disagree | 3.8% | | 18 |
| Undecided | 8.8% | | 42 |
| Agree | 51.4% | | 244 |
| Strongly Agree | 33.1% | | 157 |
| | | Total | 475 |

11. Choose the statement by an American official that you think is the best strategy for creating reform in Myanmar.



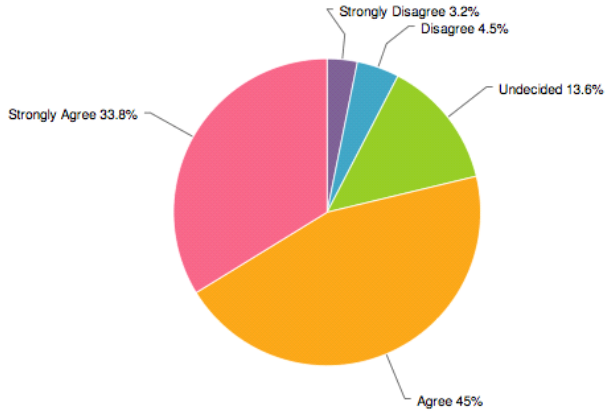

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| We need to see fundamental progress towards democracy and respect for human rights before relations with the USA could be improved or the USA would consider lifting the ban on World Bank loans to Burma imposed since 1988. | 9.4% | | 33 |
| The United States will tighten economic sanctions on the leaders of the regime and their financial backers. We will impose an expanded visa ban on those responsible for the most egregious violations of human rights, as well as their family members. | 12.3% | | 43 |
| The United States stands steadfastly with the Burmese people who aspire for a peaceful, prosperous, and democratic Burma that respects human rights and the rule of law. To that end, we will continue to pursue parallel strategies of pressure and principled engagement. The United States remains open to future possibilities of dialogue with Burma's leaders. | 78.4% | | 275 |
| | | Total | 351 |

12. Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following options:



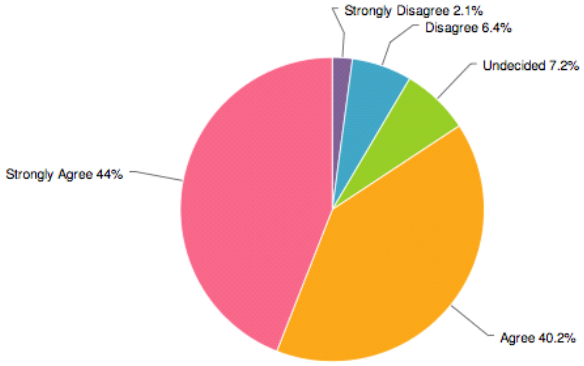

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| My Religious Views | 4.3% | | 20 |
| My Political Views | 49.5% | | 230 |
| My Income | 7.1% | | 33 |
| My Gender | 1.3% | | 6 |
| I need to protect my family | 5.6% | | 26 |
| Punish bad people | 8.4% | | 39 |
| Be fair | 30.8% | | 143 |
| I want justice | 18.3% | | 85 |
| I want to forgive | 3.2% | | 15 |
| The strong should not hurt the weak | 7.5% | | 35 |
| Law and Order | 14.0% | | 65 |
| Poor people need help | 15.3% | | 71 |
| Those who have money and power deserve it | 2.8% | | 13 |
| People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong | 0.7% | | 3 |
| other | 5.8% | | 27 |
| | | Total | 465 |

13. The Burmese representative here has just responded to the number of allegations and I think his response is quite typical of the problem of an authoritarian government that doesn't get it; that blames the victim for the problem and their ability to disregard the fact that Aung Sun Suu Kyi is popularly elected and that the people she is trying to see are popularly elected speaks volumes about their lack of understanding about what it means to have some kind of a form of Constitutional government.



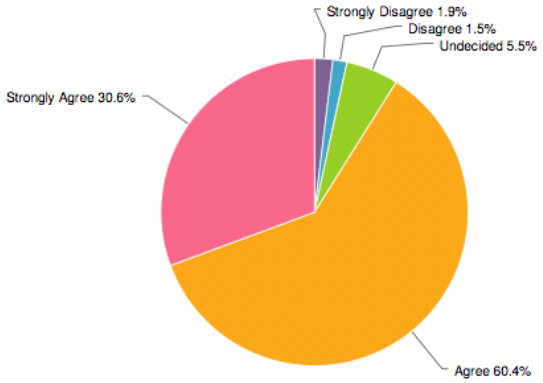

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 3.2% | | 15 |
| Disagree | 4.5% | | 21 |
| Undecided | 13.6% | | 64 |
| Agree | 45.0% | | 212 |
| Strongly Agree | 33.8% | | 159 |
| | | Total | 471 |

14. By attacking Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters, the Burmese junta has finally and definitively rejected the efforts of the outside world to bring Burma back into the international community. Indeed, their refusal of the work of Ambassador Razali and of the rights of Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters could not be clearer. Our response must be equally clear if the thugs who now rule Burma are to understand that their failure to restore democracy will only bring more and more pressure against them and their supporters.



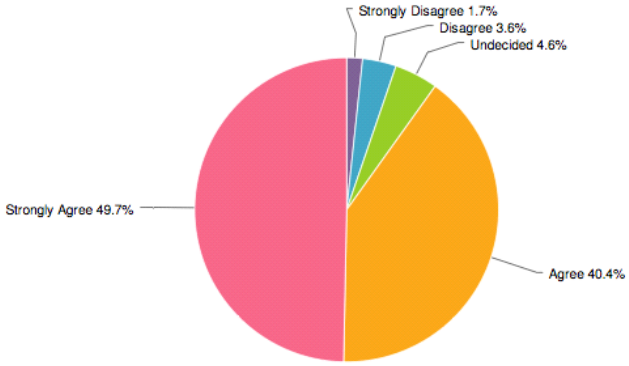

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 2.1% | | 10 |
| Disagree | 6.4% | | 30 |
| Undecided | 7.2% | | 34 |
| Agree | 40.2% | | 189 |
| Strongly Agree | 44.0% | | 207 |
| | | Total | 470 |

15. It is important that the Burmese people gain greater exposure to broader ideas. It's also important that Burmese leaders, including Burma's next generation of leaders, realize that there is a more positive way ahead. These efforts may take time, but the United States is ready to commit to that long-term effort.



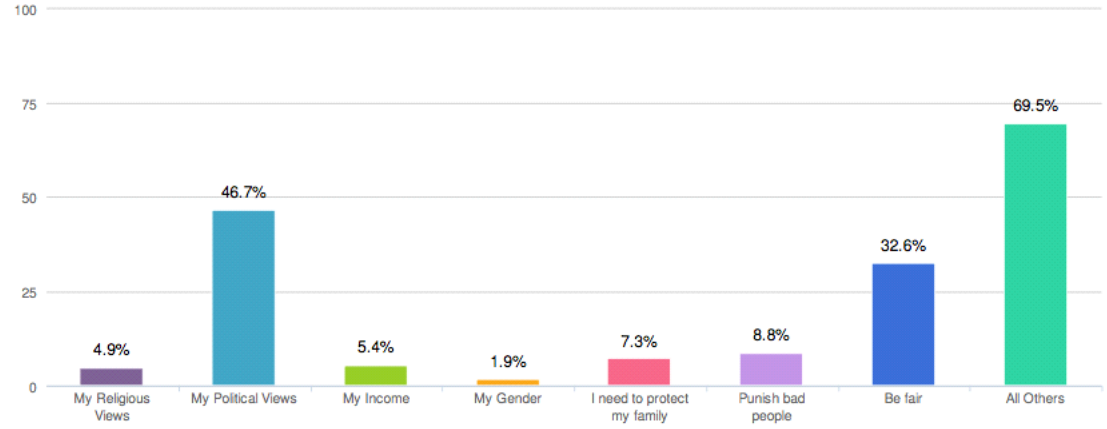

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 1.9% | | 9 |
| Disagree | 1.5% | | 7 |
| Undecided | 5.5% | | 26 |
| Agree | 60.4% | | 284 |
| Strongly Agree | 30.6% | | 144 |
| | | Total | 470 |

16. You need to reach for a future where the law is stronger than any single leader, because it's accountable to the people. You need to reach for a future where no child is made to be a soldier and no woman is exploited, and where the laws protect them even if they're vulnerable, even if they're weak; a future where national security is strengthened by a military that serves under civilians and a Constitution that guarantees that only those who are elected by the people may govern.



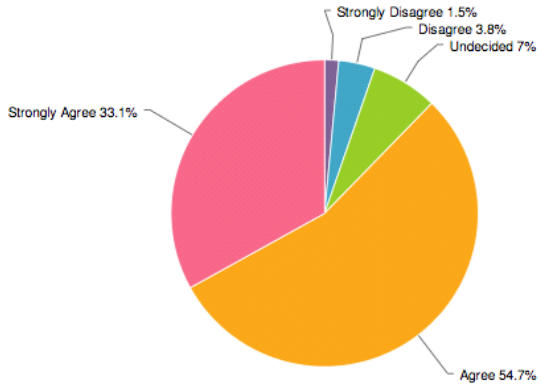

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 1.7% | | 8 |
| Disagree | 3.6% | | 17 |
| Undecided | 4.6% | | 22 |
| Agree | 40.4% | | 192 |
| Strongly Agree | 49.7% | | 236 |
| | | Total | 475 |

17. Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following options:



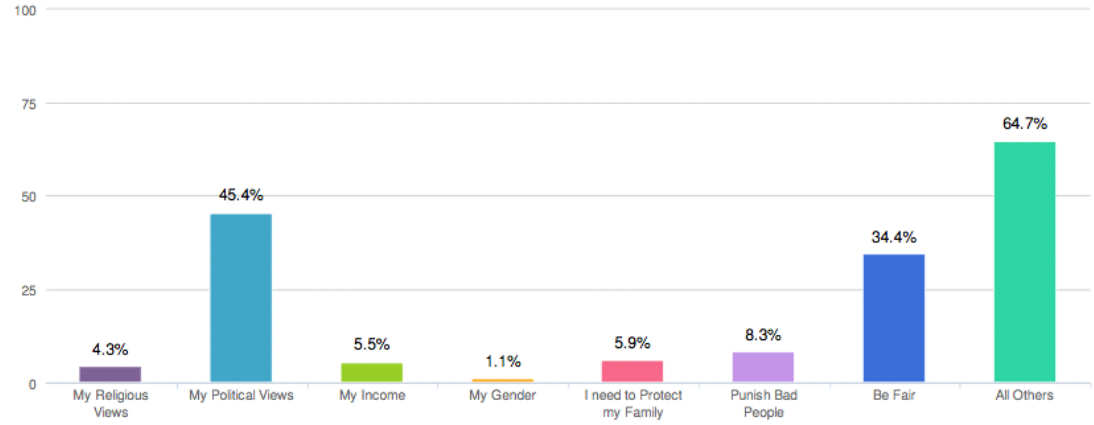

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| My Religious Views | 4.9% | | 23 |
| My Political Views | 46.7% | | 218 |
| My Income | 5.4% | | 25 |
| My Gender | 1.9% | | 9 |
| I need to protect my family | 7.3% | | 34 |
| Punish bad people | 8.8% | | 41 |
| Be fair | 32.6% | | 152 |
| I want justice | 23.3% | | 109 |
| I want to forgive | 2.8% | | 13 |
| The strong should not hurt the weak | 10.3% | | 48 |
| Law and Order | 14.4% | | 67 |
| Poor people need help | 12.9% | | 60 |
| Those who have money and power deserve it | 1.3% | | 6 |
| People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong | 1.1% | | 5 |
| other | 3.4% | | 16 |
| | | Total | 467 |

18. Every young democracy in Southeast Asia now faces a similar challenge: building democratic institutions that function transparently and accountably. Institutions like the rule of law, an independent judiciary, and a free media help to ensure that leaders remain responsible to their people. In other places, however, democracy still faces determined opponents, and where freedom is under attack, it must be defended.



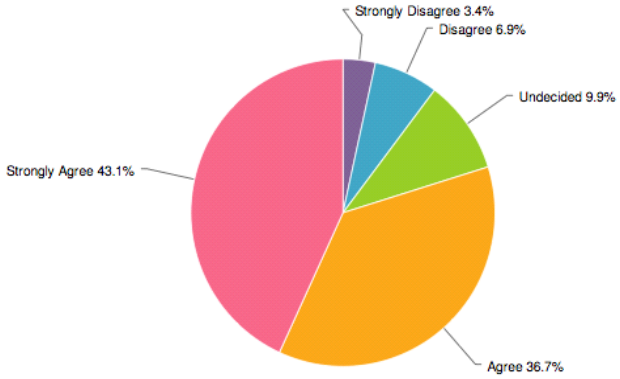

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 1.5% | | 7 |
| Disagree | 3.8% | | 18 |
| Undecided | 7.0% | | 33 |
| Agree | 54.7% | | 258 |
| Strongly Agree | 33.1% | | 156 |
| | | Total | 472 |

19. Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following points of view?



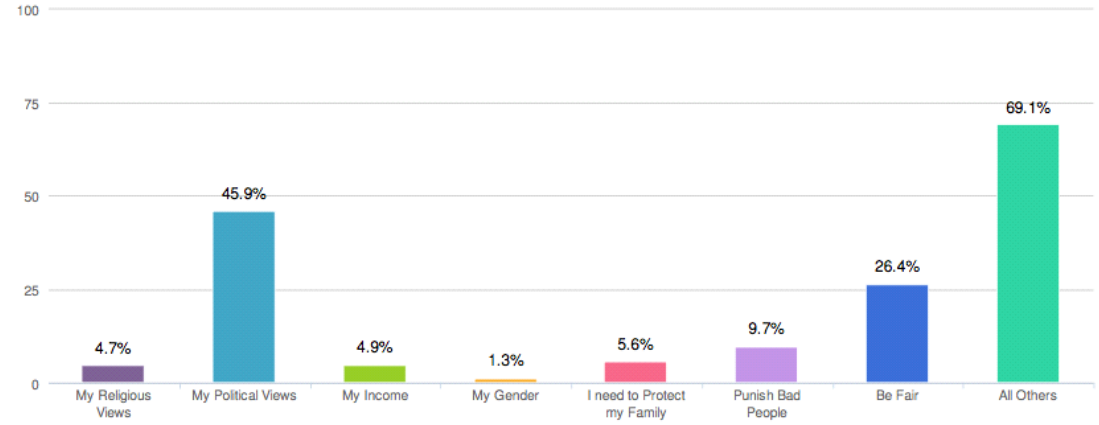

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| My Religious Views | 4.3% | | 20 |
| My Political Views | 45.4% | | 214 |
| My Income | 5.5% | | 26 |
| My Gender | 1.1% | | 5 |
| I need to Protect my Family | 5.9% | | 28 |
| Punish Bad People | 8.3% | | 39 |
| Be Fair | 34.4% | | 162 |
| I want Justice | 22.5% | | 106 |
| I want to forgive | 2.6% | | 12 |
| The strong should not hurt the weak | 7.4% | | 35 |
| Law and Order | 12.7% | | 60 |
| Poor people need help | 12.7% | | 60 |
| Those who have money and power deserve it | 1.7% | | 8 |
| People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong | 0.6% | | 3 |
| other | 4.5% | | 21 |
| | | Total | 471 |

20. We have pointed out that Burma's prosperity and stability depend on having a political system that reflects the wishes of the Burmese people. And we have stressed the importance of initiating a dialogue with the democratic opposition, and representatives of ethnic minority groups.Sadly, the authorities have responded by making a terrible situation even worse. They have stepped up their intimidation of the democratic opposition and arrested more elected members of Parliament. And they continue to increase military expenditures, while urgent social needs go unmet.



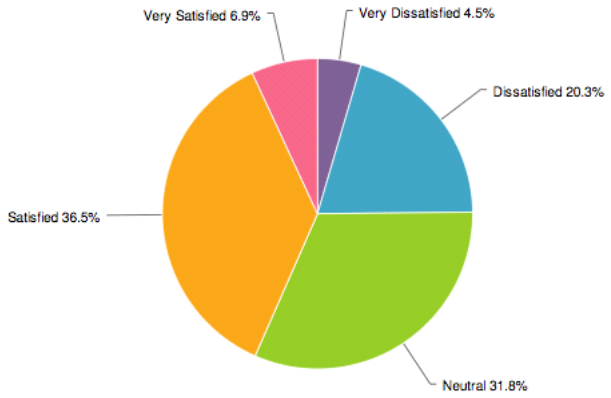

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 3.4% | | 16 |
| Disagree | 6.9% | | 32 |
| Undecided | 9.9% | | 46 |
| Agree | 36.7% | | 171 |
| Strongly Agree | 43.1% | | 201 |
| | | Total | 466 |

21. Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following points of view?



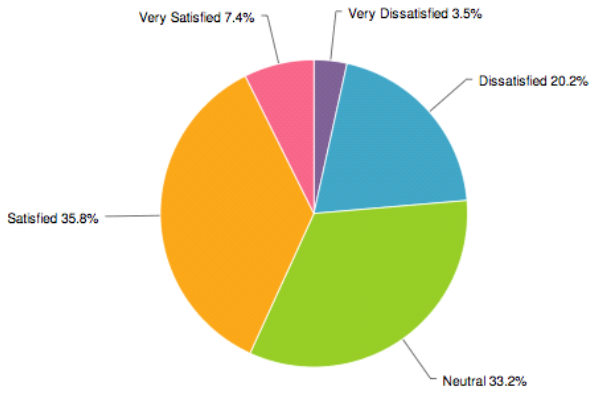

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| My Religious Views | 4.7% | | 22 |
| My Political Views | 45.9% | | 214 |
| My Income | 4.9% | | 23 |
| My Gender | 1.3% | | 6 |
| I need to Protect my Family | 5.6% | | 26 |
| Punish Bad People | 9.7% | | 45 |
| Be Fair | 26.4% | | 123 |
| I want Justice | 18.9% | | 88 |
| I want to forgive | 2.6% | | 12 |
| The strong should not hurt the weak | 10.3% | | 48 |
| Law and Order | 13.3% | | 62 |
| Poor people need help | 15.2% | | 71 |
| Those who have money and power deserve it | 1.3% | | 6 |
| People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong | 2.8% | | 13 |
| other | 4.7% | | 22 |
| | | Total | 466 |

22. What is your opinion of how U.S. President Bill Clinton's strategy was effective in helping create reform in Myanmar



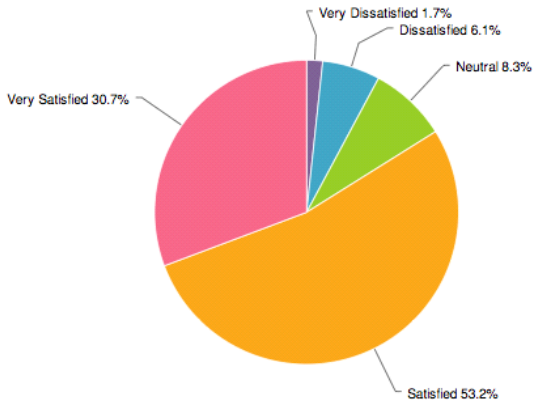

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Very Dissatisfied | 4.5% | | 21 |
| Dissatisfied | 20.3% | | 94 |
| Neutral | 31.8% | | 147 |
| Satisfied | 36.5% | | 169 |
| Very Satisfied | 6.9% | | 32 |
| | | Total | 463 |

23. What is your opinion of how U.S. President George W. Bush's strategy was effective in helping create reform in Myanmar?



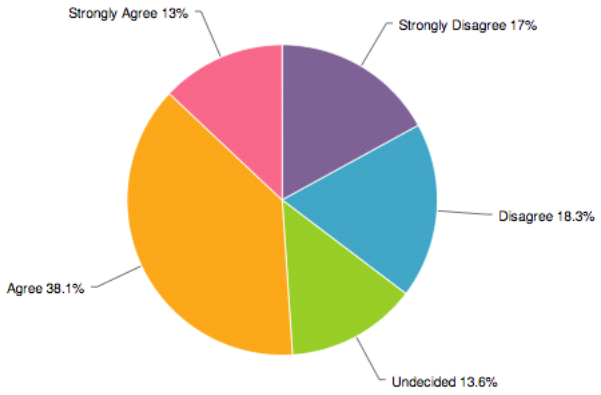

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Very Dissatisfied | 3.5% | | 16 |
| Dissatisfied | 20.2% | | 93 |
| Neutral | 33.2% | | 153 |
| Satisfied | 35.8% | | 165 |
| Very Satisfied | 7.4% | | 34 |
| | | Total | 461 |

24. What is your opinion of how U.S. President Barack Obama's strategy was effective in helping create reform in Myanmar?



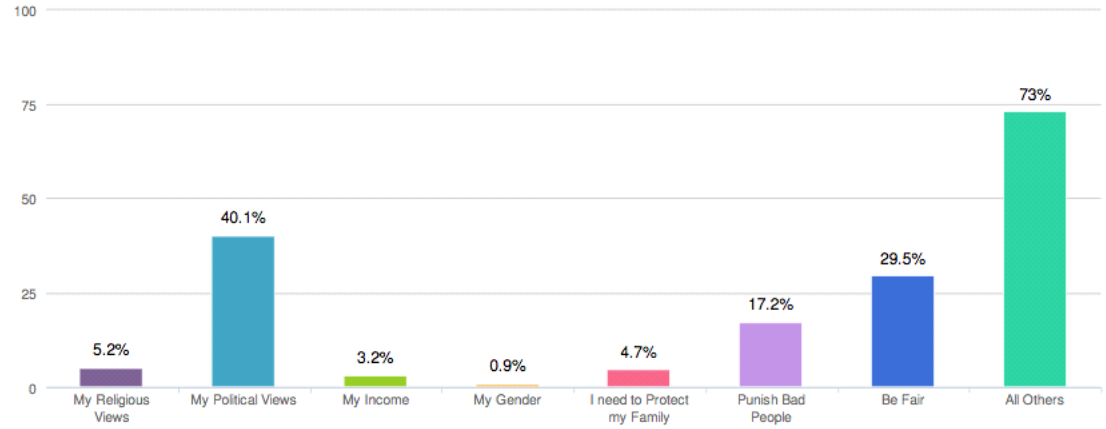

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Very Dissatisfied | 1.7% | | 8 |
| Dissatisfied | 6.1% | | 29 |
| Neutral | 8.3% | | 39 |
| Satisfied | 53.2% | | 251 |
| Very Satisfied | 30.7% | | 145 |
| | | Total | 472 |

25. Your country recently came out of a long period of isolation from much of the world due to what U.S. Presidents called human rights abuses. Do you agree that the U.S. should directly engage with world leaders who are accused of human rights abuses?



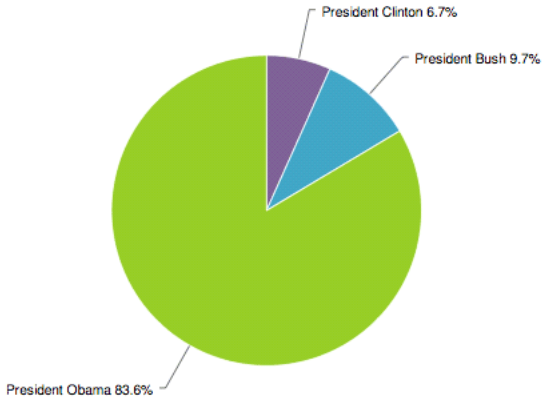

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 17.0% | | 80 |
| Disagree | 18.3% | | 86 |
| Undecided | 13.6% | | 64 |
| Agree | 38.1% | | 179 |
| Strongly Agree | 13.0% | | 61 |
| | | Total | 470 |

26. Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following points of view?



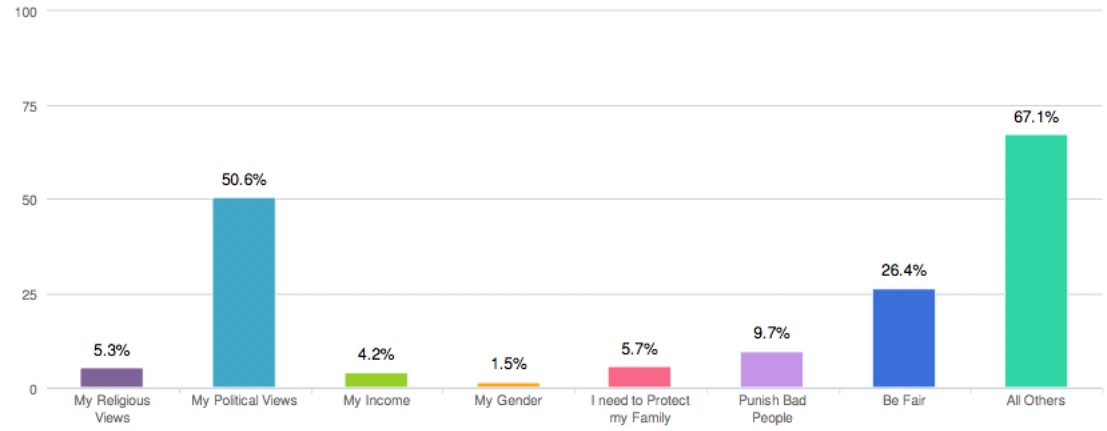

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| My Religious Views | 5.2% | | 24 |
| My Political Views | 40.1% | | 186 |
| My Income | 3.2% | | 15 |
| My Gender | 0.9% | | 4 |
| I need to Protect my Family | 4.7% | | 22 |
| Punish Bad People | 17.2% | | 80 |
| Be Fair | 29.5% | | 137 |
| I want Justice | 21.1% | | 98 |
| I want to forgive | 3.0% | | 14 |
| The strong should not hurt the weak | 7.5% | | 35 |
| Law and Order | 11.0% | | 51 |
| Poor people need help | 13.4% | | 62 |
| Those who have money and power deserve it | 8.6% | | 40 |
| People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong | 1.5% | | 7 |
| other | 6.9% | | 32 |
| | | Total | 464 |

27. Which U.S. President do you most agree with?



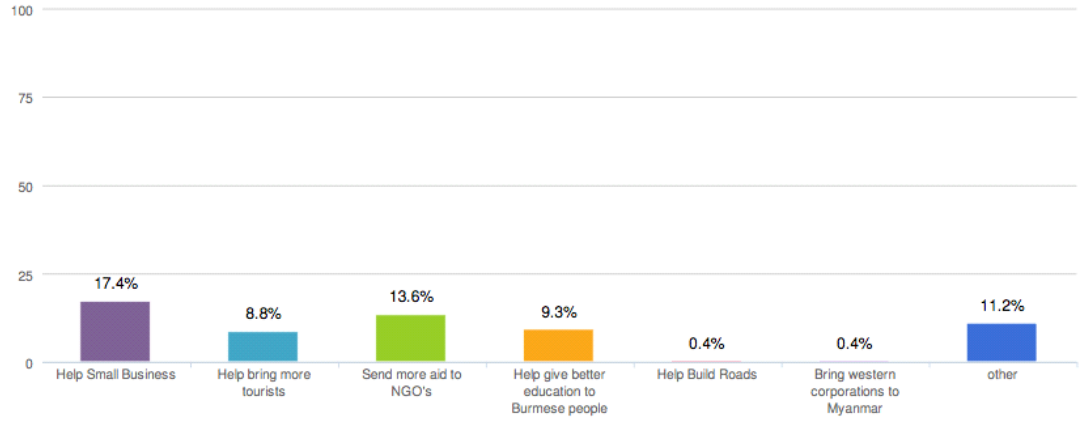

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| President Clinton | 6.7% | | 29 |
| President Bush | 9.7% | | 42 |
| President Obama | 83.6% | | 361 |
| | | Total | 432 |

28. Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following points of view?




| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| My Religious Views | 5.3% | | 24 |
| My Political Views | 50.6% | | 230 |
| My Income | 4.2% | | 19 |
| My Gender | 1.5% | | 7 |
| I need to Protect my Family | 5.7% | | 26 |
| Punish Bad People | 9.7% | | 44 |
| Be Fair | 26.4% | | 120 |
| I want Justice | 18.7% | | 85 |
| I want to forgive | 3.1% | | 14 |
| The strong should not hurt the weak | 8.8% | | 40 |
| Law and Order | 11.7% | | 53 |
| Poor people need help | 15.6% | | 71 |
| Those who have money and power deserve it | 2.0% | | 9 |
| People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong | 1.3% | | 6 |
| other | 5.9% | | 27 |
| | | Total | 455 |

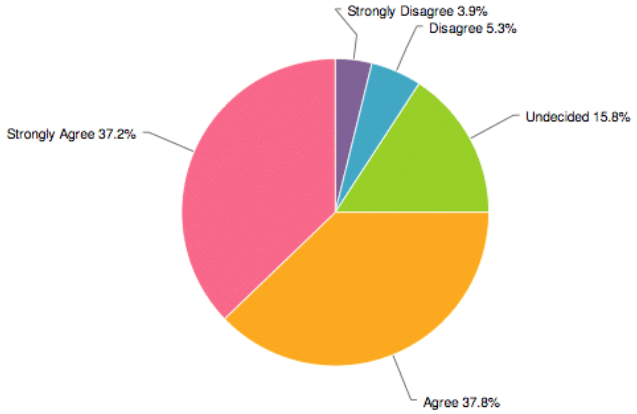
29. What should the President of the United States do to help Myanmar?




| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Help Small Business | 17.4% | | 81 |
| Help bring more tourists | 8.8% | | 41 |
| Send more aid to NGO's | 13.6% | | 63 |
| Help give better education to Burmese people | 9.3% | | 43 |
| Help Build Roads | 0.4% | | 2 |
| Bring western corporations to Myanmar | 0.4% | | 2 |
| other | 11.2% | | 52 |
| | | Total | 465 |

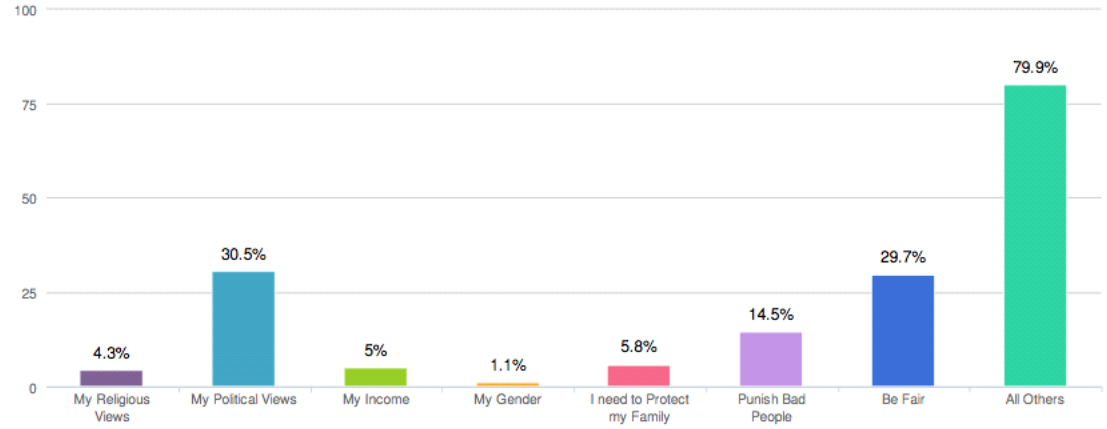
| Statistics | |
|---|---|
| Sum | 63.0 |
| Average | 0.1 |

30. As your country reforms, should the government try in court those who committed human rights abuses in the past?



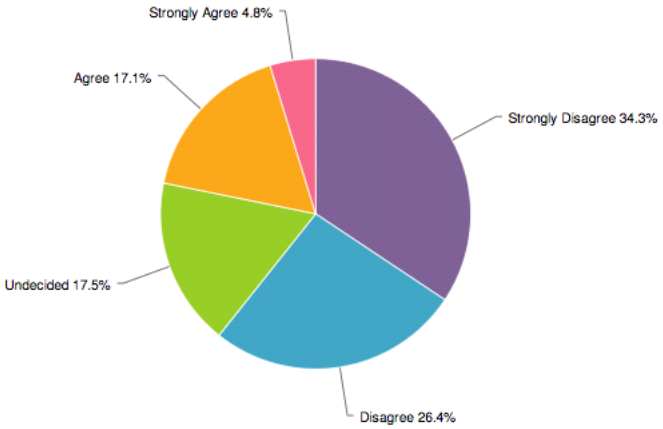

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 3.9% | | 18 |
| Disagree | 5.3% | | 25 |
| Undecided | 15.8% | | 74 |
| Agree | 37.8% | | 177 |
| Strongly Agree | 37.2% | | 174 |
| | | Total | 468 |

31. Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following points of view?



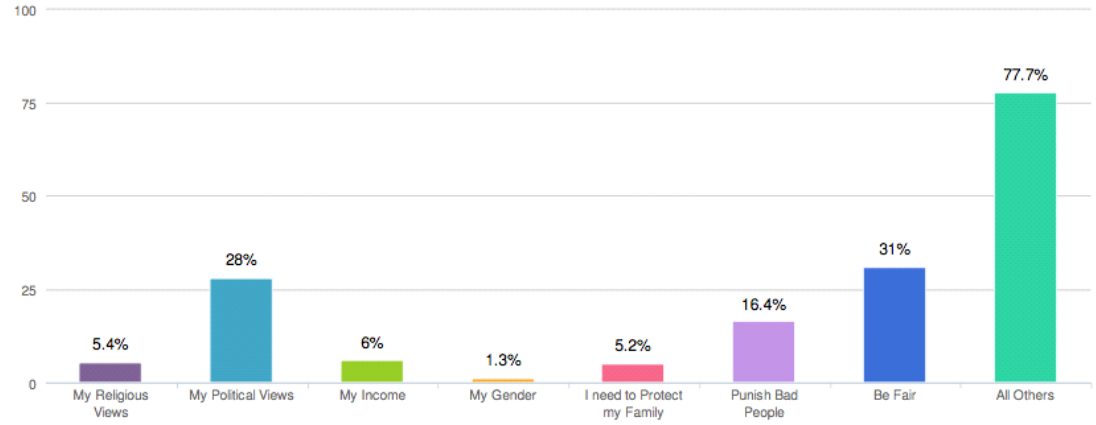

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| My Religious Views | 4.3% | | 20 |
| My Political Views | 30.5% | | 141 |
| My Income | 5.0% | | 23 |
| My Gender | 1.1% | | 5 |
| I need to Protect my Family | 5.8% | | 27 |
| Punish Bad People | 14.5% | | 67 |
| Be Fair | 29.7% | | 137 |
| I want Justice | 26.8% | | 124 |
| I want to forgive | 3.7% | | 17 |
| The strong should not hurt the weak | 9.5% | | 44 |
| Law and Order | 10.6% | | 49 |
| Poor people need help | 13.4% | | 62 |
| Those who have money and power deserve it | 9.7% | | 45 |
| People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong | 0.4% | | 2 |
| other | 5.8% | | 27 |
| | | Total | 462 |

32. As your country reforms, should the people forgive those who committed human rights abuses in the past?



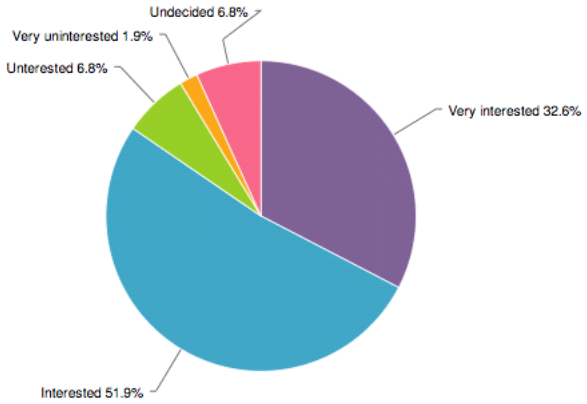

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 34.3% | | 159 |
| Disagree | 26.4% | | 122 |
| Undecided | 17.5% | | 81 |
| Agree | 17.1% | | 79 |
| Strongly Agree | 4.8% | | 22 |
| | | Total | 463 |

33. Why did you select this answer? How was your answer impacted by the following points of view?



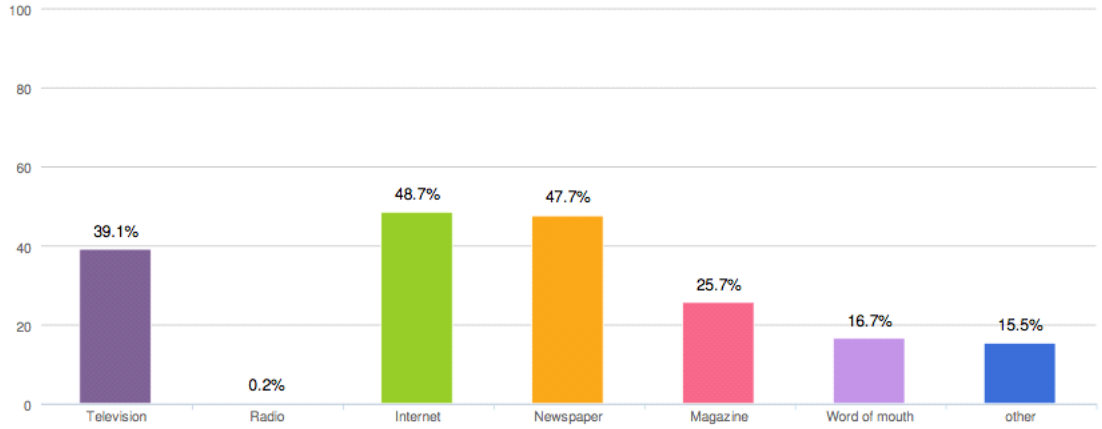

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| My Religious Views | 5.4% | | 25 |
| My Political Views | 28.0% | | 130 |
| My Income | 6.0% | | 28 |
| My Gender | 1.3% | | 6 |
| I need to Protect my Family | 5.2% | | 24 |
| Punish Bad People | 16.4% | | 76 |
| Be Fair | 31.0% | | 144 |
| I want Justice | 23.9% | | 111 |
| I want to forgive | 6.3% | | 29 |
| The strong should not hurt the weak | 8.6% | | 40 |
| Law and Order | 9.9% | | 46 |
| Poor people need help | 11.0% | | 51 |
| Those who have money and power deserve it | 9.1% | | 42 |
| People who are weak deserve to be ruled by those who are strong | 0.7% | | 3 |
| other | 8.2% | | 38 |
| | | Total | 464 |

34. How interested are you in politics?



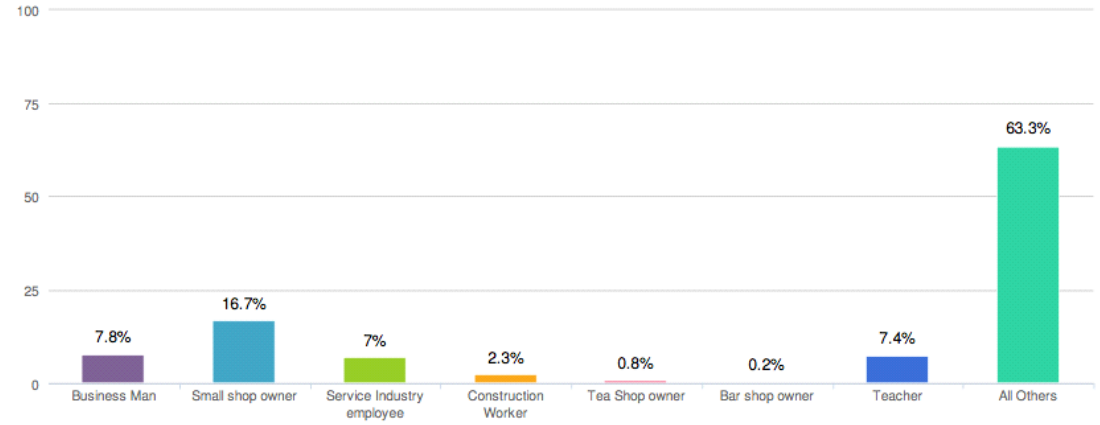

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Very interested | 32.6% | | 154 |
| Interested | 51.9% | | 245 |
| Unterested | 6.8% | | 32 |
| Very uninterested | 1.9% | | 9 |
| Undecided | 6.8% | | 32 |
| | | Total | 472 |

35. How do you receive news of political events?




| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Television | 39.1% | | 187 |
| Radio | 0.2% | | 1 |
| Internet | 48.7% | | 233 |
| Newspaper | 47.7% | | 228 |
| Magazine | 25.7% | | 123 |
| Word of mouth | 16.7% | | 80 |
| other | 15.5% | | 74 |
| | | Total | 478 |

36. Occupation: Please pick the answer that best describes your occupation

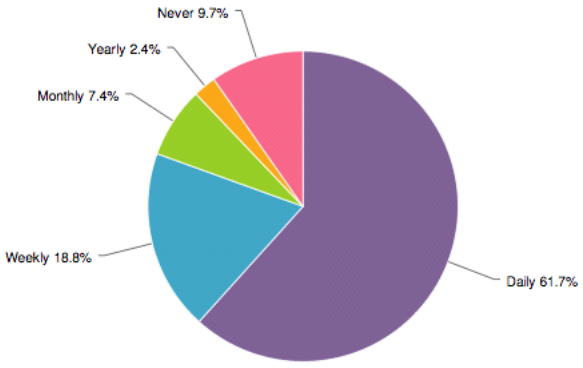



| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Business Man | 7.8% | | 37 |
| Small shop owner | 16.7% | | 79 |
| Service Industry employee | 7.0% | | 33 |
| Construction Worker | 2.3% | | 11 |
| Tea Shop owner | 0.8% | | 4 |
| Bar shop owner | 0.2% | | 1 |
| Teacher | 7.4% | | 35 |
| Student | 8.2% | | 39 |
| Farmer | 3.6% | | 17 |
| Lawyer | 3.0% | | 14 |
| Driver | 4.0% | | 19 |
| Medical Professional | 10.6% | | 50 |
| Soldier | 0.8% | | 4 |
| Engineer | 1.9% | | 9 |
| other | 31.2% | | 148 |
| | | Total | 474 |

**Statistics**

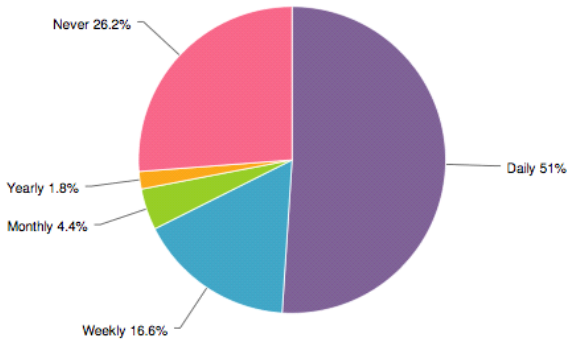
| | |
|---|---|
| Sum | 745.0 |
| Average | 1.6 |

37. How often do you read a newspaper?



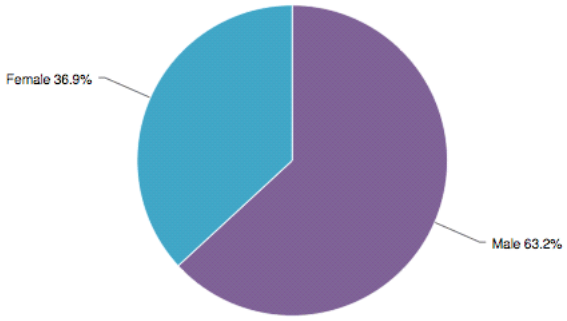

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Daily | 61.7% | | 285 |
| Weekly | 18.8% | | 87 |
| Monthly | 7.4% | | 34 |
| Yearly | 2.4% | | 11 |
| Never | 9.7% | | 45 |
| | | Total | 462 |

38. How often do you use the internet?



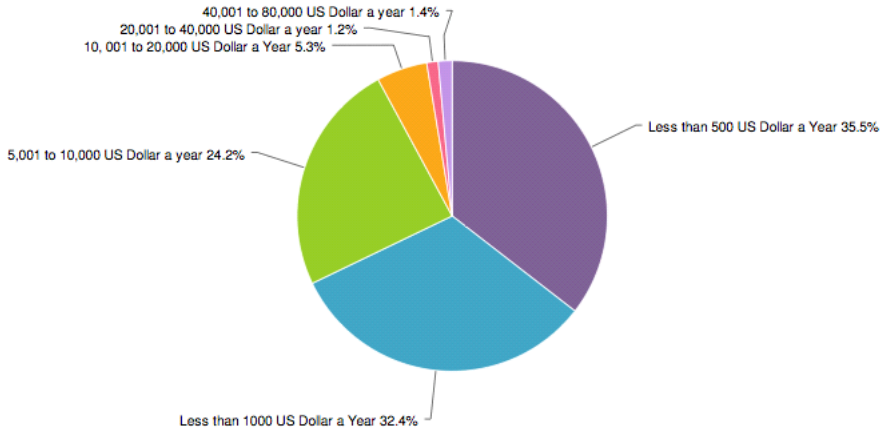

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Daily | 51.0% | | 222 |
| Weekly | 16.6% | | 72 |
| Monthly | 4.4% | | 19 |
| Yearly | 1.8% | | 8 |
| Never | 26.2% | | 114 |
| | | Total | 435 |

39. Gender



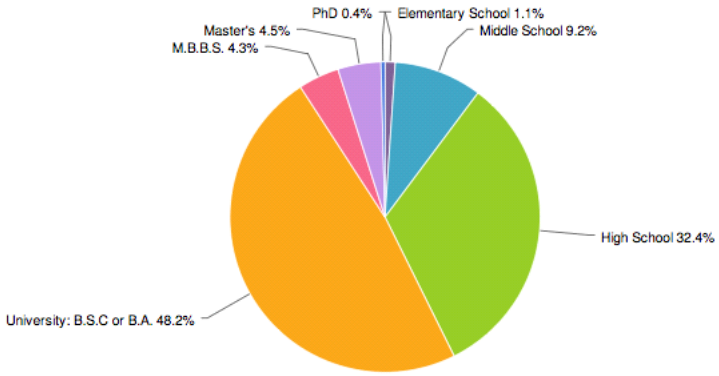

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 63.2% | | 269 |
| Female | 36.9% | | 157 |
| | | Total | 426 |

40. Income




| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Less than 500 US Dollar a Year | 35.5% | | 148 |
| Less than 1000 US Dollar a Year | 32.4% | | 135 |
| 5,001 to 10,000 US Dollar a year | 24.2% | | 101 |
| 10, 001 to 20,000 US Dollar a Year | 5.3% | | 22 |
| 20,001 to 40,000 US Dollar a year | 1.2% | | 5 |
| 40,001 to 80,000 US Dollar a year | 1.4% | | 6 |
| 80,001 to 150,000 US Dollar per year | 0.0% | | 0 |
| 150,000 US Dollar and above per year | 0.0% | | 0 |
| | | Total | 417 |

41. What is your highest level of education




| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Elementary School | 1.1% | | 5 |
| Middle School | 9.2% | | 43 |
| High School | 32.4% | | 152 |
| University: B.S.C or B.A. | 48.2% | | 226 |
| M.B.B.S. | 4.3% | | 20 |
| Master's | 4.5% | | 21 |
| PhD | 0.4% | | 2 |
| | | Total | 469 |

42. Survey location and Surveyer

| Location and Surveyor | Percent | Count |
|---|---|---|
| Yangon - Aaron | 0.8% | 4 |
| Yangon – Surveyor #1 | 38.6% | 186 |
| Yangon – Surveyor #2 | 14.3% | 69 |
| Yangon - Surveyor #3 | 6.2% | 30 |
| Yangon - Surveyor #4 | 1.5% | 7 |
| Inle Lake - Surveyor #5 | 8.1% | 39 |
| Thangyi - Surveyor #6 | 6.9% | 33 |
| Thangyi - Surveyor #7 | 5.0% | 24 |
| Mandalay - Surveyor #8 | 15.6% | 75 |
| Mandalay - Surveyor #9 | 3.1% | 15 |
| Total | | 482 |